THE GENERAL THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY LIBRARY
CHELSEA SQUARE, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10011

GIFT OF
THE BRICK PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

S. F. B. Morse P.N.A. delt. S. Jocelyn dirext A. Dick Sc.

"True, it separates, but it *unites* also. It takes us I know, *from* many we love, but it takes us *to* as many we love." Page 221.

PRACTICAL

THOUGHTS.

BY REV. WILLIAM NEVINS, D. D.

Late Pastor of a Church in Baltimore.

PUBLISHED BY THE

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,

150 NASSAU-STREET, NEW-YORK.

D. Fanshaw, Printer.

BV
4501
.N4
1836

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1836, by Rufus L. Nevins, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Southern District of New-York.

Right of publishing transferred to American Tract Society.

P. T.

CONTENTS.

No.		
1.	Do you Pray in Secret?	7
2.	Do you Pray in your Family?	13
3.	I must Pray more,	18
4.	I must Pray differently,	24
5.	Why Prayer is not heard,	30
6.	I must Praise more,	38
7.	Do you remember Christ?	42
8.	I don't like Professions,	48
9.	Are you a Sabbath School Teacher?	53
10.	Do you attend the Monthly Concert?	61
11.	Why all Christians should attend the Monthly Concert,	66
12.	Will any Christian be absent from the next Monthly Concert?	71
13.	How came it to pass?	74
14.	Why the World is not Converted?	78
15.	The Conversion of the Church,	84
16.	Inquiring Saints,	89
17.	Do you pay for a Religious Newspaper?	92
18.	Detached Thoughts,	95
19.	The late Mr. Wirt,	99
20.	Traveling on the Sabbath,	104
21.	Apologies for Travelling on the Sabbath,	111
22.	I have done giving,	118
23.	I will give liberally,	121
24.	The calls are so many,	125
25.	I can't afford it,	129
26.	An example of Liberality,	134
27.	Another example of Liberality,	140
28.	More about Liberality,	144

No.		Page
29.	A Tract Effort,	149
30.	Why the World should have the Bible,	153
31.	Mrs. M. L. Nevins,	157
32.	What strange beings we are,	161
33.	What very strange beings we are,	166
34.	Should it be according to thy mind?	170
35.	How inconsistent we are,	175
36.	The Pity of the Lord,	179
37.	Five Negatives,	185
38.	How to dispose of care,	187
39.	Do you enjoy Religion?	192
40.	Lovest thou me?	198
41.	The light of the World,	203
42.	The Salt of the Earth,	209
43.	The Distance of Death,	213
44.	Why so loth to die?	218
45.	Heaven's Attractions,	225
46.	The Heavenly Recognition,	229

The following pages consist of miscellaneous articles published by the lamented author within the year 1834 and the months of January and February, 1835, chiefly in the New-York Observer, with the signature "M. S." the finals of his name. They were written after the insidious disease by which God was pleased to transplant him to a higher sphere of labor had so affected his voice as in a great degree to disable him from his stated public ministrations. This discipline was evidently blessed in his rapid sanctification; his obtaining uncommonly clear views of truth and duty; and his ardent desire to do something to rouse Christians to greater attainments in personal holiness, and through their efforts and prayers to bless the world. His mind acted with unwonted vigor; he panted to speak to multitudes for God and eternity, and adopted the only means then remaining to him—his pen. When about two-thirds of the articles were written, he was called suddenly to part with his beloved wife; and the hallowed influence of the affliction is most apparent in the subsequent articles, the last of which, "Heaven's Attractions," with the additional fragment, seemed almost prophetic of the event which was soon to follow.

It was hoped that the substance of these articles might be embodied in a volume under the author's own supervision; but his strength was inadequate to the task. They are now published in accordance with a few general suggestions made by him a little before his death, and in the form substantially in which they at first appeared.

P. T.

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

1. Do you Pray in Secret?

I know not how it is with the reader, but I know that many persons are not in the habit of secret prayer. They have no closet, no place of retirement to which they daily resort, and where, when they have shut the door, they pray to their Father which is in secret, and in solitude seek the society of God. I am acquainted with one who for many years neglected this duty, which all religions recognize, and which even nature teaches. Sometimes he read the Bible, and no part of it oftener than the sermon on the mount. Of course he must have frequently read those words of the great Teacher, in which, taking it for granted that his hearer prays, he tells him what he should do when he prays: "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet;" (the person is supposed to have some place called his closet, to which he is accustomed to retire for prayer;) "and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." He read this, but he gave no heed to it. During all this period he asked nothing, though he received much. God did not neglect him, though he neglected God; and as he pray-

ed none, so he praised none. Sometimes, indeed, he said, "Thank God!" but it was said in so much thoughtlessness, that it was set down profaneness rather than praise. It is true, at that time he would never allow that he was ungrateful; but he was, and now he sees that he was. He lived, and moved, and had his being *in* God, and yet was *without* God in the world. Many and precious were the thoughts of God towards him, but in all *his* thoughts God was not. Not even when he was in trouble did he ask, "Where is God my maker?" I wonder the Lord had not become weary of bestowing his bounty on such an one. It is because he is the Lord and changes not. But for that, the person of whom I speak would have been consumed long ago. There is nothing he admires more than the long-suffering of God towards him, and he hopes to spend eternity in admiring it, and exchanging thoughts with his fellow-redeemed on this and kindred subjects.

He supposes that he is not the only one who has neglected secret prayer. He fears that this neglect is even now the habit of many. They are *shy* of God. I know not why they should be. He is doing every thing to woo and win them, and to secure their confidence. So much has he done, that he asks (and I cannot answer) what he could have done more. He waits on his throne of grace to be gracious to them, but they come not near to him. He even calls to them to come to him, using too the language of

most affectionate address: "Son, *my* son;" but they respond not, "Abba, Father." It is strange they should treat this Father so. They treat no other father so. What child does not, in the morning, salute his father? and what father does not expect the salutation of each child as they come into his presence? Oh, yes, we love our father who is on earth; and we remember with gratitude the favors he does us. And does the Father of our spirits, the giver of *every* good gift, deserve no daily notice from us, no affectionate salutation, no grateful recognition of indebtedness to him? I am certain he expects it, for he says, "A son honoreth his father: if then I be a Father, where is mine honor?" He claims to be a Father; and O, how well he has established that claim! Truly he is a Father, and "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth" his. And to the compassion of the father he adds the tender care and untiring mindfulness of the mother. "Can a woman," he asks, "forget her sucking child?" She may, he says, but He will not. How strange it is that men will not go to the closet to meet and to pray to such a Father!

Surely it is not for want of encouragement. If they have it not in his very *nature*, yet in his invitations, his promises, and his past acts of unsolicited kindness, they have all they could desire. Nor is it that they have no need of God. Never one of the prayerless will say that. They all know what would

become of them but for that overlooking eye, and that supplying hand, and that supporting arm. And do they not know that God has a *heart* too—that he can love with all the fervor of a friend? And can they not imagine that in the interchange of affection between God and the soul of man there may, and indeed must be, ineffable delight? And who that looks but a little way forward, does not perceive an exigency when, in the utter inadequacy of earthly and human resources for comfort, he will want "the consolations of God?"

Ah, it is a sad as well as strange thing, that so many enter no closet! seek daily no retirement, either in their houses or elsewhere, where they may be a little while alone with God; where they may look up and meet the light of his countenance as he looks down on them; where they may confess their sins, and receive assurance of his pardoning love; where they may thank him for mercies past, and humbly ask for more; where they may take counsel of him; tell him of their griefs, and have their tears wiped away, and with him leave the weighty burden of their cares.

I know not whether this excites more my grief or my wonder. I am not so much surprised that men should neglect a manifest duty, but when I think what a *privilege* it is, what a *happiness*, what an *honor*, to be on terms of intimacy, and in habits of intercourse with God, it amazes me that they should

forego it. How will such reflect upon themselves hereafter—how execrate their folly! How will they wonder that they could have deliberately done their souls such a wrong! Then it will be too late to redress the wrong. They sought not the Lord while he might be found—they called not upon him while he was near. Yea, though he called, they refused. Now they may call, but he will not answer. If any one who is living in the neglect of secret prayer shall read this, will he not be persuaded to commence the practice the very day he reads it, aye, that same hour, if it be possible? If it be not convenient, let him make it convenient. Let other things give way for this, rather than this for any thing. Can he think his heart right in the sight of God, or his condition safe in prospect of eternity, while he neglects prayer? How dare he live without prayer? Without it can he have courage to die? At the mercy-seat of God we may decline to appear, but before his judgment-seat we MUST all stand. How a frequent access to the first would prepare us for final arraignment at the other! How it would familiarize us with the presence of God! How it would serve to break the shock of the entrance into eternity!

Does any one, who is not in the habitual and daily practice of secret devotion, pretend to be a Christian? It is but pretence. He may believe the *creed* of the Christian, but certainly he does not pursue the *practice* nor possess the *spirit* of the Christian. Breath-

ing is essential to living, and prayer is the Christian's vital breath. Does he walk with God who never converses with him?

Some spiritualize the direction of Christ, making the closet to mean the heart, and the duty of private devotion to be discharged in mere mental prayer. But Christ did not so trifle. His closet was not his heart: he could not have meant that ours should be. *He* selected the still morning, and sought out the solitary place for prayer. May we be less attentive to the circumstances of time and place? Shall we talk about entering into ourselves and there *thinking* prayer? Jesus, even in his most retired intercourse with his Father, used his voice. That prayer, "Let this cup pass from me," was *vocal*—and that petition, "God be merciful to me a sinner," was expressed in words. Shall we reserve the voice exclusively for our intercourse with men, and not with it also supplicate and bless God?

Is any one inquiring after truth? What place more appropriate for asking "What is truth," than the closet? Who so likely to be *taught* of God as they who ask of God? Some men carry that question to the Bible, and press it there, as indeed they should; but they carry it not to the throne of grace, and press it there also. They *read* to know what truth is, but do not *pray* to know it.

Oh, how an hour in the morning, spent with God, prepares us pleasantly and profitably to pass the

other hours of the day with men; and at night, what so composing as communion with God! In resigning ourselves into the arms of sleep—that image of death, what security like that of prayer! It engages Him who never slumbers nor sleeps, to watch over us.

Has any one become remiss in secret devotion? What! tired of God? weary of communion with him? How sad the state of such a soul!

---

2. Do you Pray in your Family?

There are families that call not on the name of the Lord. Nor is it a new thing. There were such so long ago as when Jeremiah lived. He takes notice of them. He has a prayer about them. It seems he was divinely inspired to call down the indignation of the Lord upon such families. "Pour out thy fury," he says, "upon the families that call not on thy name." I would not like to have been a member of one of those families; and much less the head of one of them. It must have been very offensive to the Lord that there were families in which he was not acknowledged and worshiped. And if there were such families among the heathen nations that offended him, how much more must it have dis-

pleased him that there should be such families even among his people Israel! families that did not in the family capacity invoke him! I do not know why it should be less offensive now. I do not believe it is. Families are now under as great obligations to God as ever they were.

Some persons ask why we insist on family prayer as a duty. They say we cannot produce any precept enjoining it. That is true enough. But I wonder if that is not a duty, the omission of which is the subject of prophetic denunciation. I wonder if that is not by implication commanded, the neglect of which brings down the wrath of God on those guilty of the neglect. There are some things so manifestly reasonable, and of such self-evident obligation, that they need no law expressly enjoining them. It is not necessary that they should be taught *in so many words.*

But if we have no express precept on the subject, we have pretty good examples in favor of it. I suspect *Abraham*, who was so careful to instruct his household in the way of the Lord, did not neglect to pray with them. And *David*, I am quite confident, prayed in his family. It is said of him on one occasion, that "he returned to bless his household." No doubt there were both prayer and praise in that family. Certainly *Joshua* must have prayed in his house. How otherwise could he have fulfilled his resolution that his house as well as himself should

serve the Lord? What! resolve that his house should serve the Lord, and not join with them in supplication for the grace to serve him! That is not at all likely.

Now I would ask if it is not proper and right that every head of a family should adopt the resolution of him who said, "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord?" But can there be religion in a house without prayer? Is there not inconsistency in saying, "I and my family will serve God, but we will have no family altar nor offering?" Is not prayer an essential part of the service of God? I wonder if any one ever lived who supposed that family prayer was not more pleasing to God than the omission of it. I wonder if any one ever omitted it for fear of being guilty of will-worship, or through dread that it might for some reason offend God? I wonder if the practice of family prayer ever distressed any conscience. The omission of it has troubled many.

It is admitted, I believe, to be the will of God that we should pray to him *socially*. The Lord's prayer was constructed for *social* use. The disciples were directed to use it when they should pray together; and it is accordingly in the *plural* number: not *my* Father, but "*our* Father." Now, is God to be socially worshiped, and yet not worshiped in that first, most permanent, and most interesting form of society—the form of society instituted by God himself—the family? Is that to be believed? But the

Lord's prayer seems not only intended for social, but for *daily* use. "Give us *this day* our daily bread" is one of its petitions. It does not contemplate the morrow. It asks supplies but for one day. Now if, as it appears from this reasoning, social prayer should be *daily*, where but in the family, the society which is abiding, and which a single roof covers, can it with propriety be daily? Should there be public religious services daily, or daily prayer-meetings for this purpose? Then, how suitable it is that those who together share their daily bread, should together daily ask it.

How reasonable and comely is household religion—family worship! Common blessings, such as families daily share, call for common thanksgivings. Common wants, such as families together feel, call for common supplications. Is it not fit that families, in retiring to rest at night, should together commit themselves to the divine keeping; and in the morning unite in praising the Lord for having been their protector? It is a clear case, it seems to me. Besides, fathers are directed to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." But can they do this while they pray not with them and for them? I do not know how we are to comply with the apostolical exhortation to pray "every where," unless we pray in the family, as well as under other circumstances.

Is any one in doubt whether the practice or omis-

sion of family prayer will be the more pleasing subject of retrospect from the dying bed, or the eternal world? Parents should not forget, that presently will come the long deferred and greatly dreaded season of taking the last look, and the last leave of those whom their decease is to make orphans. O then, what a sweet thought it will be to enter into the dying meditation, that they have been in the daily habit of bowing down with their children in prayer, and commending them to the care and grace of their heavenly Father, and that they may now indulge the confident hope that he will infinitely more than supply the paternal place which they are to leave vacant.

But what need of more argument? I suspect every body secretly admits the obligation of family prayer. I judge so from the trouble many are at to apologize for the neglect. It tries them not a little to satisfy even themselves with an excuse. The usual plea is *inability*. They have not the *gift*, they say. What gift? Can they not collect their family together night and morning? Have they not so much authority in their own house as that? And then can they not read a portion of Scripture to them; and kneeling down, express their common desires to God. If they cannot frame a prayer at the moment, yet can they not use a form? It requires no great gift to read a prayer in an audible voice. But what if it be hard at first, it will soon be easy, if persevered in. The

beginning of almost every good habit is difficult. The most of those who make this apology, *presume* on their inability. They say they cannot before they have tried. But until they have tried, they do not know whether they can or not. What if some have tried once and failed. One failure should not dishearten them, nor two, nor even twenty. Demosthenes tried speaking many times before he became an orator. Besides, how do those who presume on their inability to conduct family worship, know what assistance they might receive from God, if they were to make an humble and faithful experiment.

If any one shall condescend to read this, who does not pray in his family, I advise him to commence immediately. He knows that he will never be sorry for it, if he does; but he is not so sure that he may not be sorry for it if he does not. If there were no other reason in favor of the practice, this alone would be sufficient. I think it is *Jay* who says that a family without prayer is like a house without a roof—it has no protection. Who would like to live in such a house?

---

3. I must Pray more.

I habitually feel this necessity, but the other day the conviction came to my mind with strange power,

and I said with greater emphasis than ever, *I must pray more.* It struck me with indescribable wonder that so little time should be employed, and so little energy expended in prayer, even by those who are prompt to acknowledge its dignity as a privilege, and its efficacy as a means of obtaining good. It is not now as it was in patriarchal times. *We* do not pray as Jacob did. He wrestled until the breaking of the day. Yes, his praying was *wrestling*, and it lasted all night. *We* put forth no such power in prayer, and we do not allow the repose of our nights to be interrupted by it. It is not because our wants are all supplied that we are so feeble and brief in prayer—nor is it that God's bounty is exhausted. We are as poor as creatures ever were, and He as rich and munificent as ever. His hand is not shortened, neither his ear heavy.

Only think how small a portion of each successive day is spent in prayer. I wonder if any Christian ever thought of it without being so dissatisfied as to resolve that he would spend more time in prayer the next day. Just add together the minutes you daily occupy in supplication, and the kindred exercises of devotion, scriptural reading and meditation, and see to what it will amount. Will the sum total be *one hour?* What! less than an hour a day in devotion?—not one twenty-fourth part of time! And is this all which can be afforded? Let us see. How much time has *business?* Could not a little be saved

from business for prayer? Do you not give an hour or two more to business every day than it absolutely requires? Then how much time has *sleep* for the refreshment of the body? Might not some little time be redeemed from sleep and spent in prayer, with more profit to the whole man than if it were given to repose? Would not the soul thereby obtain a *rest*, which would most favorably react on the body? I do not believe that the Psalmist suffered any thing in the day for the hours of night he spent in communing on his bed with his own heart and with God. I do not believe that even "tired nature" had any reason to complain of that interruption of the repose due to her. I suspect he enjoyed as good health, and was as vigorous through the day as we, though he rose at midnight to give thanks unto God, and prevented the dawning of the morning with his prayer. Such interruptions of sleep are no loss even to the body. I am sure, and I think no one can doubt, that considerably more time might be afforded for prayer than is actually given to it. If we take none from business and none from sleep, yet could not some be spared from the *table*, or *conversation*, which is not always the most profitable? Perhaps some of us spend more time in barely receiving the body's nourishment, than we do in the entire care of the soul! But not to dwell to tediousness on this topic. You have only to look back on a day, to perceive how much of it might have been spent in prayer and

devotion without interfering with any thing which ought not to be interfered with.

Seeing then that we *can* pray more—that time can be afforded for it, I am amazed that we do not pray more. If prayer was nothing but a *duty*, we ought to pray more. We do not pray enough to discharge the mere obligation of prayer. We are *commanded* to pray more than we do, aye, to pray "without ceasing." But prayer, while it is a duty, is rather to be viewed by us in the light of a *privilege*. And O it is *such* a privilege! What a favor that we may petition God and ask of him eternal life, with the confidence that we shall not ask in vain! How strange it is that we no more value and exercise this *privilege* of prayer! It is astonishing that the sense of want, or the desire of happiness, does not carry us oftener to the throne of grace, and that we should ever require to be incited to prayer by the stimulus of conscience. Oh! I wonder that we do not oftener go in unto the King, whose gracious sceptre is ever extended towards us—I wonder we have not more frequent and longer interviews with our heavenly Father. It is strange we do not pray more, when prayer is the *easiest* way of obtaining good. What is so easy as to *ask* for what we want? How could we receive blessings on cheaper terms? Surely it is easier than to labor, and less expensive than to buy. It may be hard to the spirit to ask of men. To beg of them you may be ashamed. But no such

feeling should keep you aloof from God. He giveth and upbraideth not.

But prayer is not merely the easiest way of obtaining good. It is the *only* way of obtaining the greatest of all good. The subordinate necessaries of life we get by labor or purchase; but the things we most need are given in answer to prayer. The one thing needful is a divine donation. We *ask*, and receive it. Now we labor much. Why do we not pray more? Do we seek a *profitable* employment? None is so profitable as prayer. No labor makes so large a return. If you have an unoccupied hour—and you have many, or might have—by redeeming time, you cannot employ it in any way that shall tell so favorably on your interests as by filling it up with petitions to God. Yet when we have such an hour, how apt we are to spend it in unprofitable intercourse with our fellows, rather than in communion with God. It is wonderful that we talk so much, when "the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury," and pray so little, when prayer "brings a quick return of blessings in variety."

Is there any thing attended by a purer *pleasure* than prayer? One who knew, said, "It is *good* for me to draw near to God"—and again, "It is good to sing praises unto our God: for it is *pleasant*, and praise is comely." All the exercises of devotion are as full of pleasure as they are abundant in profit.

But prayer is not only a means of *getting* good.

It is such a means of *doing* good, that I wonder our benevolence does not lead us to pray more. We are commanded, "as we have opportunity," to do good unto all men. Now prayer affords us the opportunity of being *universal* benefactors. *Through God* we can reach all men. We can make ourselves felt by all the world, by moving the hand that moves it. In no other way can we reach all. Prayer makes us, in a sense, omnipresent and omnipotent. It prevails with Him who is both.

The *world* needs your intercessions. It lies in wickedness. *Zion* needs them. She languishes because few pray for her peace; few come to her solemn assemblies. Whose *family* needs not the prayers of its every member? Who has not kindred that are out of Christ? With such a call upon us for prayer so urgent, and from so many quarters, I wonder we pray no more.

I must pray more, for then I shall *do* more—more for God, and more for myself; for I find that when I pray most, I accomplish more in the briefer intervals between my devotions, than when I give all my time to labor or study. I am convinced there is nothing lost by prayer. I am sure nothing helps a student like prayer. His most felicitous hours—his hours of most successful application to study, are those which immediately follow his seasons of most fervent devotion. And no wonder. Shall the collision of created minds with each other produce in them a

salutary excitement, and shall not the communion of those minds with the infinite Intelligence much more excite them, and make them capable of wider thought and loftier conceptions?

I must pray more, because other Christians, whose biography I have read, have prayed more than I do.

God is disposed to hear more prayers from me than I offer; and Jesus, the Mediator, stands ready to present more for me.

If I pray more, I shall sin less.

I *will* pray more. The Lord help to fulfill this resolution.

---

4. I must Pray differently.

Some time ago I felt strongly the necessity of praying *more*, and I expressed that impression in an article entitled, "I must pray more." Now I feel that I must not only pray more, but *differently;* and that my praying more will not answer any good purpose, unless I also pray differently. I find that *quality* is to be considered in praying as well as *quantity;* and, indeed, the former more than the latter. We learn from Isaiah, chapter 1, that it is possible to make many prayers, or to multiply prayer, as it is in the margin, and yet not be heard. The Scribes

and Pharisees made long prayers; but their much praying availed them nothing, while the single short petition of the publican was effectual to change his entire prospects for eternity. It was because it was prayer of the right *kind*. It is a great error to suppose that we shall be heard for our much speaking. Let me, however, say, that while length is not by itself any recommendation of prayer, yet we have the highest and best authority for continuing a long time in prayer. We know who it was that, "rising up a great while before day," departed into a solitary place, and there prayed; and of whom it is recorded in another place, that he "continued all night in prayer to God." Certainly they should spend a great deal of time in prayer, who are instructed to "pray without ceasing." It is in the social and public worship of God that long prayers are out of place.

But to return from this digression. I must pray differently; and I will tell you one thing which has led me to think so. I find that I do not pray *effectually*. It may be the experience of others, as well as of myself. I do not obtain what I ask; and that though I ask for the right sort of things. If I asked for temporal good, and did not receive it, I should know how to account for it. I should conclude that I was denied in mercy; and that my prayer, though not answered in kind, was answered in better kind. But I pray for spiritual blessing—for what is inherently and under all circumstances good, and do not

obtain it. How is this? There is no fault in the hearer of prayer—no unfaithfulness in God. The fault must be in the offerer. I do not pray right. And since there is no use in asking without obtaining, the conclusion is that I must pray differently.

I find, moreover, that I do not pray as they did in old time, whose prayers were so signally answered. When I compare my prayers with those of the Patriarchs, especially with that of Jacob—and with the prayers of the prophets, those, for instance, of Elijah and Daniel; when I compare my manner of making suit to the Savior, with the appeals made to him by the blind men, and by the woman of Canaan; and above all, when I lay my prayers along side of His, who "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears," I perceive such a dissimilarity, that I thence conclude I must pray differently.

I find also that I do not urge my suits to God as I do those which I have sometimes occasion to make to men. I am wiser as a child of this world, than I am as one of the children of light. When I want to carry a point with a human power, I find that I take more pains, and am more intent upon it, and use greater vigilance and effort, than when I want to gain something of God. It is clear, then, that I must alter and reform my prayers. I must pray differently.

But in what respects? *How* differently?

1. I must not speak to God at a distance. I must *draw near* to him. Nor that alone. I must stir my-

self up to *take hold* of him. Isaiah, 64 : 7. Yea, I must take hold of his strength, that I may make peace with him. Isaiah, 27 : 5. I have been satisfied with *approaching* God. I must, as it were, *apprehend* him.

2. I must not only take hold of God in prayer, but I must *hold fast* to him, and not let him go, except he bless me. So Jacob did. There were two important ingredients in his prayer—faith and perseverance. By the one he took hold of God; by the other he held fast to him till the blessing was obtained.

3. I must be *more affected* by the subjects about which I pray. I must join tears to my prayers. Prayers and tears used to go together much more than they do now. Hosea says that Jacob "wept and made supplication." Hannah wept while she prayed. So did Nehemiah, and David, and Hezekiah; and God, in granting the request of the last mentioned, uses this language: "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears." But a greater than all these is here. Jesus offered up prayers "with strong crying and tears." Some think it *unmanly* to weep. I do not know how that may be; but I know it is not *unchristian*. It is thought by some, that men must have been more addicted to tears then than they are now; but it is my opinion that they *felt* more, and that is the reason they wept more. Now I must feel so as to weep; not by constraint

but in spite of myself. I must be so affected, that God shall see my tears as well as hear my voice; and in order to being so affected, I must meditate. It was while David mused that the fire burned; and then he spake with his tongue in the language of prayer. And we know that which melted his heart affected his eye, for in the same Psalm, the 39th, he says, "Hold not thy peace at my tears."

4. There are other accompaniments of prayer which I must not omit. Nehemiah not only wept and prayed, but also *mourned*, and *fasted*, and *made confession*. Why should not I do the same?

5. I must *plead* as well as pray. My prayers must be more of the nature of *arguments*—and I must make greater use than I have ever done of certain pleas. There is one derived from the *character* of God. "For thy *name's sake* pardon mine iniquity. Have mercy on me *according to thy loving kindness*." Another is derived from the *promises* of God. "Hath he said, and shall he not do it; or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Another is drawn from the past doings of God. "I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember thy wonders of old." I must also plead Christ more in my prayers. The argument is drawn out to our hands by Paul: "He that spared not his own Son .... *how shall he not* with him also freely give us all things?"

6. But again: I must *cry* unto the Lord. Crying expresses more than praying. It expresses earnest, fervent prayer. This is what they all used to do. They cried to God. The Psalmist says: "I cried with my *whole heart.*" I must cry with my whole heart—yea *mightily*, as even the Ninevites did, else those heathen will rise up in the judgment and condemn me.

7. I must seek the Lord in prayer, feeling as did Job, when he said, "O, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat!" And this I must do, as Judah is once said to have done, with my "whole desire." Yea, I must *search* for him with all my heart. I must even *pour out my heart* before him, as the Psalmist, on one occasion, exhorts. I must "keep not silence, and give him no rest," as Isaiah directs; "night and day praying *exceedingly*," as Paul says he did.

8. And I must pray in the *Holy Ghost*, as Jude exhorts. We need the Spirit to help our infirmities, and to make intercession for us. Nor should we be satisfied with any prayer in which we have not seemed to have his help.

Finally, I must alter and alter my prayers, till I get them right; and I must not think them right until I obtain the spiritual blessings which they ask. If I pray for more grace, and do not get it, I must pray differently for it, till I do obtain it.

Oh, if Christians prayed differently, as well as

more, what heavenly places our closets would be! What interesting meetings prayer-meetings would be! What revivals of religion we should have! how frequent, numerous, and pure! What a multitude of souls would be converted! What joyful tidings we should hear from our Missionary stations, and from the heathen world! Oh, what times we should have! The Millennium would be on us before we knew it.

And because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, the offering of a different kind of prayer for the Spirit, would do more to put down error than all other means which can be resorted to. The preachers of truth cannot put it down without the aid of the Spirit of truth.

Let us then pray differently. Let us at least *try*. I am sure it is worth the effort. Let every one who reads this resolve, "I *will* pray differently."

---

5. Why Prayer is not heard.

There are some who are not at all interested in this inquiry. They offer no prayer. There is in their case nothing to be heard. They are content with the things which are to be had without asking. Such are in a bad way, and I suspect they some-

times themselves think so. That dependent creatures should habitually and devoutly acknowledge their dependence before God; and that needy creatures, whose necessities return every day, and indeed recur with every moment, should ask God to supply them, is too reasonable a thing for men to neglect it, and yet be at perfect peace with themselves.

But to pass from those who never make the experiment of prayer, we observe that some pray without any expectation or care to be heard. To obtain is not their object. Their end is accomplished in asking. They hear and judge that prayer is a duty owed to God. They therefore pray, that they may discharge this duty; and having prayed, and so done their duty, they are satisfied. Of course such persons obtain nothing. Why should they? If a child of yours should come and ask you for any thing from a mere sense of duty, you would say, "Very well, you have done your duty, go;" but you would not give him the thing. He did not ask it with any wish to get it. He does not feel his want of it. He meant only to do his duty in asking. It makes very little difference with such what is the matter of their prayer—what petitions they offer. Any thing that is of the nature of supplication will do. It is true, they generally pray for the right things, because the prayers they have heard and read petitioned for such, and they fall naturally into that style of prayer. Ask such persons if their prayers are heard, and you

astonish them. That is what they never looked for. They never asked any thing with the hope of receiving it—never prayed from a sense of want. I have sometimes thought, how many would never pray, if prayer was not a duty. They never pray except when urged to it by conscience. As a privilege, they set no value on it. Now the truth is, when a man is really engaged in prayer, he altogether forgets that it is a duty. He feels that he wants something which God alone can give, and therefore goes and asks it; and feeling that he wants it very much, he is in earnest, asks and asks again, and waits and pleads for it, till he gets it. Does any one suppose that the publican smote on his breast, and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner," from a sense of duty, and not rather from a conviction of sin, and a deep feeling of his need of mercy? And yet how many ask for mercy from a mere sense of duty. They have their reward, but they do not obtain mercy.

Some prayers proceed from a conviction of want, while there is no *sense* of want. The persons judge that they need the things they ask for, but they do not *feel* their need of them. Now, prayers, which come from no deeper source than the understanding, are not heard. They must come from the heart. True prayer always originates in the heart. It is the heart's sincere desire. Or, as another has well described it, "It is a sense of want, seeking relief from God."

But there may be a sense of want, and yet no real desire for that which is adapted to the supply of the want. In that case the prayer, not being sustained by a corresponding desire in the heart, is not heard. There is a conflict here. The lips pray one thing and the heart another. The request is perhaps to be delivered from all sin, but the desire is to be delivered from all but one or two favorite sins. Now it would be strange if God should grant a man's request to the disregard of his desire—that he should attend to the lips rather than the heart, and answer the prayer according to its terms rather than its meaning.

But sometimes the desire for the thing requested is real, while the mischief is, it is not *paramount*—it is not supreme. This is a common case. The prayer expresses what is desired, but not what is desired on the whole. Many really wish to be religious, and they pray that they may be so, but they do not on the whole desire it. They have a strange wish to be something else which is incompatible with their being religious. Again, some sincerely desire the progress of the Gospel, and pray, "thy kingdom come," but they desire still more to take their ease, or to keep their money. Perhaps some of this description attend the Monthly Concert. But desire may be sincere and supreme, and yet not *intense*. Effectual prayer is the expression of intense desire. The examples of successful prayer recorded

in the Bible evince this. The woman of Canaan sincerely, supremely, and intensely desired what she asked. Such was the character of Jacob's desire for a blessing, and of the publican's for mercy. Where the desire of spiritual blessings is not very strong, it shows that these blessings are not suitably estimated.

A great deal depends on having a petition properly presented. It is all-important to get it into the right hands. A petition frequently fails through inattention to this. If the proper person had been engaged to present and urge it, it would have been granted. This holds true of suits to the throne of the heavenly grace. We must ask in the name of Christ. We must put our petitions into his hands, and engage the great Advocate to present and urge them. Him the Father always hears. Even the prayers of the saints need an incense to be offered along with them to render them acceptable. That incense is Christ's intercession.

To present a petition is one thing. *To prosecute a suit* is another. Most prayer answers to the former. But successful prayer corresponds to the latter. The children of this world are in this respect wise in their generation. When they have a petition to carry, they go with it to the seat of government, and having conveyed it by the proper channel to the power which is to decide upon it, they anxiously await the decision, in the meantime securing all the influence they can, and doing every thing possible

to ensure a favorable result. So should the children of light do. But frequently they just lodge their petition in the court of heaven, and there they let it lie. They do not press their suit. They do not employ other means of furthering it, beyond the simple presenting of it. They do not await the decision on it. The whole of prayer does not consist in *taking hold* of God. The main matter is *holding on.* How many are induced, by the slightest appearance of repulse, to *let go*, as Jacob did not! I have been struck with the manner in which petitions are usually concluded: "And your petitioners will *ever pray.*" So "men ought *always* to pray, (to God,) and never faint." Payson says: "The promise of God is not to the act, but to the habit of prayer."

Sometimes prayer is not heard, because not offered *in faith.* "He that cometh to God, must believe." Yea, he must "ask in faith, nothing wavering." Sometimes it is for want of a concomitant *submission to the will* of God. He who said, "let this cup pass from me," added, "nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Often prayer fails because the direction to pray *every where* is neglected. The petition proceeds from the closet, but is not also offered in the family, in the social meeting, and in the solemn assembly. Sometimes a specific direction is given concerning something to be done in connection with prayer which being neglected, the prayer by itself is unavailing. Thus, in order that we may not enter into

temptation, we are commanded to "watch and pray." Vain is prayer to secure against temptation, if vigilance be omitted. Prayer is sometimes ineffectual, because too *general*. When we ask many things, it commonly indicates that we are not in earnest for any thing. The heart is incapable of being at the same time the subject of many intense desires. The memorials of the children of this world are specific. They are rarely encumbered with more than one petition. Does any one suppose that when prayer was made of the church for Peter, being in prison, they prayed for every body and every thing first, and only brought in Peter's case at the close?

Petitions have usually numerous signatures. So should there be *union* in prayer among Christians. Social supplication has particular value in the estimation of God. Special promises are made to it. Need I say that *allowed sin* vitiates prayer? "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

There is a regard to the *promises* which ought to be had in prayer. Moreover, *confession* of sin out of a broken heart, and *gratitude* for good received, should accompany it. And there is a "praying in the Holy Ghost," which we should aim to understand and realize.

At an earlier stage of these remarks I might have observed that some prayer is not heard, because it is *said* rather than prayed. Now, prayer ought to be

prayed. The closet is not the place for recitation. What more common than this expression: "I *must say* my prayers?" *Must* you indeed? Is this the way you speak of it? Is it a task to which you are going reluctantly to apply yourself? and *say* your prayers too? How this contrasts with the cheerful purpose of the Psalmist, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning *will* I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up."

Perhaps one brings his gift to the altar, and forgets that his brother has aught against him; or remembering it, does not go first and seek reconciliation with him, but proceeds to offer his gift, and that is the reason it is not accepted.

Many a Christian hinders his prayer by indulging in that species of unbelief, which surmises that what he asks is *too great* a thing for God to bestow on one so unworthy as he is. He forgets that the greatest, aye the greatest gift, has already been conferred in God's own Son, and the foundation therein laid for the argument, "how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" God, having begun his bounty in such a style of magnificence, consistency requires him now to go on, and do the greatest possible thing for the recipients of his Son.

6. I must Praise more.

The title of a recent article was, "I must *pray* more;" and in it I expressed wonder that we pray so little, and gave reasons why we should pray more. But it strikes me that we ought to *praise* more as well as pray more. I do not know how it is with others, but I know that I have a great deal for which to be thankful and to paise God. I feel that it will not do for me to spend all my breath in prayer. I should thus, it is true, acknowledge my dependence on God; but where would be the acknowledgment of his benefits conferred upon me? I must spend a part of my breath in praise. O! to be animated from above with that life, whose alternate breath is prayer and praise! God has been very good to me. Yes, he has exercised goodness towards me in all its various forms of pity, forbearance, care, bounty, grace and mercy; or to express all in one word, "God is love," and he has been love to me. I do not know why he should have treated me so kindly. I have sought, but can find no reason out of himself. I conclude it is because he "delighteth in mercy." His nature being love, it is *natural* for him to love his creatures, and especially those whom he has called to be his children. O! the goodness of God! The thought of it sometimes comes over me with very great power, and I am overwhelmed in admiration. Nothing so easily breaks up the foun-

tain of tears within me. Those drops, if I may judge from my own experience, were intended as much to express gratitude as grief. I think I shall be able, without weariness, to spend eternity on the topic of divine love and goodness.

Reader, can you not adopt my language as your own? Has not God been the same to you? And shall we not *praise* him? Shall all our devotion consist in prayer? Shall we be always thinking of our wants, and never of his benefits—always dwelling on what remains to be done, and never thinking of what has already been done for us—always uttering desire, and never expressing gratitude—expending all our voice in supplication, and none of it in song? Is this the way to treat a benefactor? No, indeed. It is not *just* so to treat him; neither is it *wise*. It is very bad policy to praise no more than Christians in general do. They would have much more success in prayer, if one-half the time they now spend in it were spent in praise. I do not mean that they pray too much, but that they praise too little. I suspect the reason why the Lord did such great things for the Psalmist was, that, while he was not by any means deficient in prayer, he abounded in praise. The Lord heard his *psalms*, and while he sung of mercy shown, showed him more. And it would be just so with us, if we abounded more in praise and thanksgiving. It displeases God that we should be always dwelling on our wants, as if he had never supplied

one of them. How do we know that God is not waiting for us to praise him for a benefit he has already conferred, before he will confer on us that other which we may be now so earnestly desiring of him? It is wonderful how much more prone we are to forget the benefit received, than the benefit wanted—in other words, how much more inclined we are to offer prayer than praise. For *one* who offers genuine praise, there may be found *ten* that pray. Ten lepers lifted up their voices together in the prayer, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us," but only one of the ten "returned to give glory to God." The rest were satisfied with the benefit—this one only thought gratefully of the benefactor. His gratitude obtained for him, I doubt not, a greater blessing than ever his prayer had procured; and praise has often, I believe, in the experience of the people of God, been found more effectual for obtaining blessings than prayer. A person, being once cast upon a desolate island, spent a day in fasting and prayer for his deliverance, but no help came. It occurred to him then to keep a day of thanksgiving and praise, and he had no sooner done it than relief was brought to him. You see, as soon as he began to sing of mercy exercised, the exercise of mercy was renewed to him. The Lord heard *the voice of his praise.*

Christian reader, you complain perhaps that your prayer is not heard; suppose you try the efficacy of praise. Peradventure you will find that the way to

obtain new favors is to praise the Lord for favors received. Perhaps, if you consider his goodness, he will consider your wants. It may be you are a parent, and one child is converted, but there is another concerning whom you say, "O that *he* might live before Thee!" Go now and bless the Lord for the conversion of the first, and it is very likely he will give thee occasion shortly to keep another day of thanksgiving for the salvation of the other. Some of us are sick. Perhaps it is because we did not praise the Lord for health. We forget that benefit. We do not forget our sickness. O no. Nor is there any lack of desire in us to get well. We pray for recovery. And so we should; but it strikes me that we might get well sooner were we to dwell with less grief and despondency on our loss of health, and, to contemplate with cheerful and grateful admiration what God has done for our souls—the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins; and how he spared not his own Son, that he might spare us; and gives us now his Spirit, to be in us the earnest of heaven, our eternal home. If we were to think such thoughts, to the forgetfulness of our bodily ailments, I judge it would be better for the whole man, body and soul both, than any other course we can pursue. If the affliction should still continue, we should count it *light*, aye, should rejoice in it, because it is his will, and because he says he means to make it work our good.

There is nothing glorifies God like praise. "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me." Ps. 1 : 23. Prayer expresses dependence and desire; but praise admiration and gratitude. By it men testify and tell all abroad that God is good, and thus others are persuaded to "taste and see that the Lord is good." Praise is altogether the superior exercise of the two. Prayer may be purely selfish in its origin, but praise is ingenuous. Praise is the employment of heaven. Angels praise. The spirits of the just made perfect praise. We shall not always pray, but we shall ever praise. Let us anticipate the employment of heaven. Let us exercise ourselves unto praise. Let us learn the song now, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness." But above all, "let the *saints* be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds." I charge thee, my soul, to praise him, and he will never let thee want matter for praise. "While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being."

---

7. Do you remember Christ?

I know you cannot help thinking of Christ sometimes. His story is too extraordinary to be heard once and never again remembered. There is also

much which we daily see and hear to remind us of him. Doubtless you often *involuntarily* remember him; but do you *voluntarily*, and of choice, remember him? Do you ever, by an exercise of volition, recall the memory of him? He is sometimes intruded into the society of your thoughts, but do you ever invite him there? Do you ever say, "Come now, let me think of Christ?" I doubt not you do this also. You voluntarily remember—you call to mind his incarnation, his miracles of mercy, his doctrine, his example, his resurrection; but do you particularly remember his *death?* His death was the main circumstance in his history. Do your thoughts, passing from the manger along the track of his sorrowful story, fasten on the cross?

May I ask, moreover, *with what* you remember him? Whether it is a mere intellectual operation, or one in which the heart is conjoined? There are recollections which pass across the mind without ever stirring the most easily excited emotions of the heart. Is your recollection of Christ of this kind? or do you *feel* while you think of him? Do your affections move in the line of your thoughts, and collect about the same centre? Jesus ought to be remembered with the heart. We should *feel* when we think of him. You say, perhaps, "I do not only mentally, but *cordially* remember Christ." But do you remember him *practically?* Do you *do* any thing in remembrance of him? It is customary not

only to remember, but to commemorate great benefactors; and that not merely by speaking of their benevolent exploits, but by some appropriate acts. Do you this with respect to Christ, that greatest, best of benefactors?

Perhaps you answer: "I do many things out of regard to the memory of Christ. His precepts generally I endeavor to obey." That is all very well; but do you *that* which he appointed, or requested to be done in remembrance of him, on that "same night in which he was betrayed?" Some do not. Even some who profess respect, and indeed love for Christ, do not! It is strange, but so it is. They remember Christ in their own way, but not in his way. They do some things in remembrance of him, but not that which he said "*do*." I wonder they do not adopt *his way*. I cannot help suspecting their love when I see they do not. It always appeared to me that such a benefactor as Christ ought to be remembered in his own way—that he deserved to have the privilege of saying how he would be remembered; and that sinners, whom he died to save, should remember him in that way, even though it should not seem to them the most appropriate and reasonable manner of commemorating him. I do not know how it strikes others, but so it always struck me; and I confess I take the bread and eat it, and I put the cup to my lips, primarily, because he said, "Do this."

The question about the usefulness of visible me-

morials, and the suitableness of these memorials, I am content that he should settle. I know very well that if there be no natural adaptation in these memorials to do me good, he can connect a blessing with them. It is my part to obey him. It is enough for me that my Savior inclined to this mode of being remembered, and expressed such a wish: the least I can do is to comply with it. He did not express a great many wishes. It is an easy yoke he calls us to take—a light burden to bear. I cannot help regarding it as unkind, that this one wish of Jesus should not be complied with; and especially when I consider what a friend he was—what a benefactor! I use the word *benefactor*—but those who are acquainted with the etymology of the word, know it does not express all that Christ was. It implies *doing* out of good will to others; but his benevolence was not satisfied with benefaction: he *suffered*—he *died* for others. Strong as death—stronger was his love! And consider, too, the circumstances under which this wish was expressed—*when* it was, and *where*. *All* his wishes, I think, should be complied with; but this was his *last*. He was going to suffer—he was to die in a few hours: and *such* a death too! and for them of whom he made the request, that they might die never. And the request was touching his death. He desired it might be commemorated as he signified. Oh, to think that such a wish should not be complied with—the tender re-

quest of the dying Redeemer not regarded! Who would have believed it? I wonder those words, "broken for you," do not break the heart of every one who refuses.

Men treat no other being so. Out of their own mouths I will judge them. They know the sacred regard they pay to last wishes and dying injunctions; and that, though they are under no particular obligations to the persons expressing them, and though the things desired be often unreasonable, yet, because they are last wishes—dying requests, the individuals expressing them being about to make the awful transition to eternity, how solemnly they charge the memory with them! how punctiliously they comply with them! We feel as if persons in such circumstances had a right to command us. I never knew one such request, if it was practicable, and at all reasonable, that was not complied with. I ought to say, I never knew *but* one. The last request of Jesus Christ—his last solemn injunction on those whom he bled to save, forms the solitary exception! Oh, it is too bad! It were a neglect unpardonable, but for the mediation of the very being who is the object of it. Nothing but his blood can cleanse from the sin of putting away from us the offered emblem of it. I know not how to make any apology for it. Jesus pleaded for his murderers, that they knew not what they did. But those who disregard his dying injunction, know what they do.

Excuses, it is true, they make; but to what do they amount? Can any doubt that Christ said, "Do this?" Can any doubt that he meant it to be done by all who believe on him? What reason can be imagined why one redeemed sinner should partake of the emblems of the body and blood of Christ, which does not equally apply to every redeemed sinner? Should not as many as the body was broken and the blood shed for, partake of the memorials of that transaction? What propriety is there in limiting the command, "Do this," and not the declaration, "This is my body broken for you?" If we put it on the ground of right to command, questions any one the right of Christ to issue mandates? What *duty* plainer—more peremptory? Do some pay respect to this, who do not obey other commands of Christ? What if it be so? Is that a reason why you should add another to your acts of disobedience?

Do you refrain because it is a solemn transaction? Far more solemn are death, judgment, and eternity, from which, nevertheless, you cannot refrain. Do you feel yourself to be too unworthy? But will this neglect make you less unworthy? A sense of unworthiness is a grand part of the qualification. Are you afraid of sinning, should you in this way remember Christ? But you are *certain* of sinning by not remembering him. Say you, "I cannot trust myself?" But can you not trust Christ? If there is danger that you will prove faithless, yet is there any

danger that he will? It is because you are not to be trusted, that you should trust him who is able to keep that which is committed to him. If you trust him for strength, you are as sure of being supplied as of being pardoned, if you trust him for that. Why should not you remember Christ? He remembers you—yes, *practically* remembers you; nor one thing merely does in remembrance of you, but many. What *if* he should make excuses for not remembering you?

But perhaps you will cut short the interview by saying, "I am now quite unprepared for this act; hereafter I mean to attend to it." Be it known to you, then, that there are greater things for which you are unprepared, and they are things which you cannot evade or defer, as you can this; and as to that hereafter on which you count, who art thou that boastest of to-morrow?

---

8. I don't like Professions.

This is the reason which many give for not acknowledging Christ. They say, when urged upon the point, that they "don't like professions." A strange reason this for not obeying the express command of the Divine Savior! What if they do not like pro-

fessions, do they equally dislike obeying commands? If so, they had better say, "I don't like obedience to the commands of God." But they profess to be well disposed to obey: it is only to *professing* that they object. Well, then, let them obey all the precepts which they find in the Bible, and we will not trouble them about a profession. Why should we? In that case they will obey the precept which enjoins a profession; they will do the thing appointed in *remembrance* of Christ.

But "I don't like professions." And who does like *mere* professions? Who ever contended in favor of a man's professing to have what he has not? Professions are very different from *mere* professions. Suppose a person has what he professes to have, what then? What is the objection to a profession in that case? I see none. If a man loves the Lord Jesus, I can see no harm in his professing or declaring his attachment to him. It is very natural to declare it. We profess attachment to others—to relatives, friends, benefactors, pastors, civil rulers. Why not to Christ? How does his being the subject of the profession constitute such an objection to it? Is he the only being to whom we may not profess attachment?

"Don't like professions?" Why yes, they do. Professions of friendship, of patriotism, and of loyalty they like. Why not of religion? Why should not religion be professed as well as other things? Are attachment to the Gospel, love to Christ, regard

for the authority of Jehovah, and adherence to his government, the only things never to be professed?

I do not see any objection to professions, but I see propriety and utility in them, even if it were optional with us to make them or not. If it were left to our choice, it strikes me, we ought to choose to profess love and obedience to Christ. But suppose it is required, does not that alter the case? Will these persons say they do not like what God requires? And does he not require a profession? His inspired apostle twice exhorts Christians to *hold fast* their profession. Does not that imply that it is made, and *ought* to be made? How is a person to hold on to that of which he has never taken hold? Is not the public confession of Christ required when it is made a condition of salvation? Rom. 10 : 9, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Does not divine authority require it, when to the doing of it is made one of the most precious promises in the whole Bible? "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Is not that duty, against the omission of which such a threatening lies as this, "But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven?" Matt. 10 : 32, 33. It is very plain that God requires professions, though some men do not like them.

"You don't like professions!" Then *Joshua*, a man that followed the Lord *fully*, falls under your censure, for he professed the service of God. "As for me and my house," said he, "we will serve the Lord." Are we to think the worse of him for this? Some ask what is the *use* of a profession. If they will observe what followed Joshua's profession, they will see the use of it. They will see that it brought out all Israel. "*We* will also serve the Lord," said they, and they entered that day into a covenant to serve him. Nor did their practice belie their profession, for it is recorded that "Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the Elders that overlived Joshua." So much for a profession. It is agreed on all hands that that professing generation, in piety and devotion to God, surpassed any other during the national existence of Israel.

We read in 1 Tim. 2 : 10, of certain things which are said to become "women professing godliness." It would seem from this to be the duty of women to profess godliness. And if of women, of men also, I suppose. What case of *real* subjection to the Gospel of Christ do we read of, which was not also a case of "professed subjection" to it? Paul, in 2 Cor. 9 : 13, speaks of some who glorified God for the "professed subjection" of others unto the Gospel of Christ. It appears then that God is glorified by these professions. And I should presume, from certain passages in the Bible, that he is not glorified when a

profession is withheld. There were in primitive times some who did not like professions. It is no new thing not to like professions. In John, 12 : 42, 43, we read that "among the chief rulers many believed on him, but" as they did not like professions, "because of the Pharisees they did not confess him—for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." It is no honorable mention which is intended to be made of another, of whom it is said that he was "a disciple of Jesus, but *secretly*, for fear of the Jews." John, 19 : 38. Fear made him decline a profession for a time; but at length he came out openly on the side of Christ, and besought Pilate for the body of Jesus.

If they who say they do not like professions, mean that they do not like false, or loud, or ostentatious, or *barely verbal* professions, let them say so, and we will agree with them; but let them not mean this, and say, without qualification, they "don't like professions."

It is truly strange, because some now, as in apostolic times, "profess that they know God, but in works deny him," that others will never profess to know him. Because men have professed friendship, and have proved no friends, therefore they will not only not profess friendship, but they will abstain from certain acts and expressions of friendship, because they involve a profession of it! It is a pity that men who are going to give an account of themselves to God. should reason and act thus.

Well, they must do as they please; but of one thing I am sure. The hour is coming, when, however they may now dislike professions, they will like them. They may not now like to confess Christ before men, but they will then like to have Christ confess them before his Father. They may not like to call him now the beloved of their souls, but they will like to have him call them, on that day, the blessed of his Father.

---

9. Are you a Sabbath School Teacher?

I am a little apprehensive that the title of this article will be read by some who will give no hearing to the article itself. There are those, who, being professors of religion, or at least well disposed thereto, are not Sabbath School teachers, and yet strongly suspect sometimes that they ought to be. Such are not fond of reading an enumeration of the reasons why they should engage in this benevolent employment, because these reasons are apt to appear more cogent than their objections to it. After such a perusal, they are very prone to feel as if they ought to take hold of this good work, and not being prepared to do that, it is rather more agreeable to them not to have the feeling that they ought. It is uncomforta-

ble to carry about with one a sense of obligation which he is not disposed to discharge.

But I hope my apprehensions will be disappointed: so I proceed to the article. Are you a Sabbath School teacher? If you are, you are engaged in a good work. Yes, it is good, both as acceptable to God, and as profitable to men. It is good in its direct operation, and good in its reflex action. It is not merely teaching the young idea how to shoot, but, what is still more important, it is teaching the young and tender affection what to fix upon, and where to entwine itself. Nothing hallows the Sabbath more than the benevolent employment of the Sabbath School teacher. It is more than lawful to do such good on the Sabbath day. It has great reward. Continue to be a Sabbath School teacher. Be not weary in this well-doing. Do not think you have served long enough in the capacity of teacher, until you have served life out, or until there shall be no need of one saying to another, "Know the Lord." What if it be laborious? It is the labor of love, in the very fatigue of which the soul finds refreshment.

But perhaps you are not a Sabbath School teacher. "No, I am not," methinks I hear one say. "I am not a professor of religion. You cannot expect me to be a teacher." You ought to be both, and your not being the first is but a poor apology for declining to be the other. The neglect of one obligation is a slim excuse for the neglect of another. You seem

to admit that if you professed religion, it would be your duty to teach in the Sabbath School. Now, whose fault is it that you do not profess religion? But I see no valid objection to your teaching a class of boys or girls how to read the word of God, though you be not a professor of religion. I cannot think that any person *gets harm* by thus doing good. Experience has shown that the business of teaching in the Sabbath School is *twice* blessed—blessing the teacher as well as the taught.

But you are "not good enough," you say. Then you need so much the more the reaction of such an occupation to make you better. The way to *get* good is to do it. "But I am not a young person." And what if you are not? You need not be very young in order to be a useful Sabbath School teacher. We don't want mere *novices* in the Sabbath School. If you are not young, then you have so much more *experience* to assist you in the work. Do Sabbath School teachers become *superannuated* so much earlier in life than any other class of benefactors—so much sooner than ministers and parents? There is a prevailing mistake on this subject.

But you are married, you say. And what if you are? Because you have married a wife or a husband, is that any reason why you should not come into the Sabbath School? Many people think that as soon as they are married, they are released from the obligation of assisting in the Sabbath School.

But I do not understand this to be one of the immunities of matrimony. As well might they plead that in discharge of the obligation to every species of good-doing. Such might, at least, postpone this apology till the cares of a family have come upon them. And even then, perhaps, the best disposition they could make of their children on the Sabbath, would be to take them to the school. I wonder how many hours of the Sabbath are devoted to the instruction of their children by those parents who make the necessity of attending to the religious culture of their families an apology for not entering the Sabbath School; and I wonder if their children could not be attended to in other hours than those usually occupied in Sabbath School instruction; and thus, while they are not neglected, other children, who have no parents that care for their soul, receive a portion of their attention. I think this not impossible. But perhaps the wife pleads that she is no longer her own, and that her husband's wishes are opposed to her continuing a teacher. But has she ceased to be her Lord's by becoming her husband's? Does the husband step into all the rights of a Savior over his redeemed? If such an objection is made, it is very clear that she has not regarded the direction to marry "only in the Lord."

But perhaps you say, "There are enough others to teach in the Sabbath School." There would not be enough—there would not be any, if all were like

you. But it is a mistake; there are not enough others. You are wanted. Some five or six children, of whom Christ has said, "Suffer them to come to me," will grow up without either learning or religion, unless you become a teacher. Are all the children in the place where you live gathered into the Sabbath School? Are there none that still wander on the Lord's day, illiterate and irreligious? Is there a competent number of teachers in the existing schools, so that more would rather be in the way than otherwise? I do not know how it is where you live, but where I live, there are boys and girls enough, aye, too many, who go to no Sabbath School. It is only for a teacher to go out on the Sabbath, and he readily collects a class of children willing to attend; and where I reside, there are not teachers enough for the scholars already collected. Some classes are without a teacher, and presently the children stay away, because, they say, they come to the school, and there is no one to attend to them. He who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," knows this; and he knows who of "his sacramental host" might take charge of these children, and do not. They say every communion season, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and the Lord replies, "Suffer the little children to come to me," and there the matter ends.

I visited recently an interesting school, composed of colored adults and children. It is taught partly

by white persons, and partly by intelligent colored persons. It is languishing now for want of teachers. There were present some twenty-five or thirty females, and only *two* female teachers. I wondered to see no more than two there of those who were last at the cross and first at the sepulchre. I thought it a little out of character. One of these told me that often there had been forty present, but as two could not attend to them all, they had gradually become discouraged, and had dropped off one after another. They found they must give up learning to read, though they wanted very much to learn to read the Bible. Some large classes of fine looking boys sat there without any teacher. No man cared for them. I *said* it was a *pity*, but I *thought* it was a *shame*. The church with which this school is connected, abounds in able-bodied professors of religion, who could easily supply this want. But they don't do it. They say they *can't;* but the truth is, they *wont*. I know some have an antipathy to the colored; but, as I suppose, they are comprehended in that "world" of which we read, John, 3 : 16, that God loved it, and certainly in that "whole world," of which we read, 1st John, 2 : 2, as connected with Christ's propitiation, I have none. As for those, however, who are so much more fastidious than their Lord, there are white children enough to employ them.

But I hear one say, "I *was* once a teacher;" and do you not blush to own that you became weary in

this species of well-doing? "But I think I taught long enough." How long did you teach? Till there were no more to learn? Till you could teach no longer? Are you dead? If not, you are resting from your labors rather prematurely. This excuse resembles one which I heard of, as from a lady of wealth, who, having for several years been a subscriber to the Bible Society, at length ordered her name to be striken off, alleging that she thought she had done her part towards disseminating the Bible! The world was not supplied; O no, not even the country; and her means were not exhausted. But she had done her part. Had she done *what she could?* The woman whom Jesus commended had "done what she could." But this is a digression.

But one says, "I want the Sabbath for myself—for rest and for improvement." And who does not? Are you busily employed all the week? So are some of our most faithful teachers. You ought to be "diligent in business" during the days of the week. "Six days shalt thou labor." "But is there any *rest* in Sabbath School teaching?" The soul finds some of its sweetest rest in the works of mercy, and often its richest improvement in the care to improve others.

But perhaps you say, though with some diffidence you express this objection, that you belong to a circle in society whose members are not accustomed to teach in the Sabbath School. Do you mean

that you are *above* the business? You must be exceedingly *elevated* in life to be above the business of gratuitously communicating the knowledge of God to the young and ignorant. You must be exalted above the very throne of God itself, if you are above caring for poor children. "But I should have to mingle with those beneath me in rank." Ah, I supposed that Christianity has destroyed the distinction of rank, not indeed by depressing any, but by elevating all. Should Christians, all cleansed by the same blood and spirit, treat other Christians as common?

"But I am not qualified to teach." If you are not in reality, you should undertake teaching for the sake of learning. The best way to learn any thing, is to teach it. If you only think yourself not qualified, your very humility goes far towards qualifying you.

"O, it is too laborious. There is so much self-denial in it" And do I hear a disciple of Christ complaining of labor and self-denial, when these are among the very conditions of discipleship? Is the disciple above his master? Can you follow Christ without going where he went? And went he not about doing good? Pleased he himself?

Ah, I know what is the reason of this deficiency of Sabbath School teachers, and I will speak it out. It is owing to a deplorable want of Christian benevolence in them who profess to be Christ's follow-

ers. They lack the love that is necessary to engage one in this labor of love. They have no *heart* for the work.

---

10. Do you attend the Monthly Concert?

I would like to have this piece *read*, though I know very well that many of those I ask to read it, could themselves write a better article on the same subject. I am a little afraid that some who do *not* attend the Monthly Concert, will read the *heading* of the article and then turn to something else, presumed to be more interesting. As that, however, will look very much like a desire to evade the light, and an unwillingness to hear why we should attend the Concert, I hope they will, through dread of that imputation, conclude to read the whole article. I cannot doubt they have their reasons for not attending, and I promise that if they will have them printed, I will carefully read them, provided they will read my reasons in favor of attendance.

I put a *question*. I put it not to every body. I ask it not of the *world*, for the world is the *object* of the Concert, and cannot be expected therefore to join in it. I put it to the professor of religion—the reputed disciple of Christ. I ask him if he attends

the Monthly Concert? He knows what I mean by that phrase—the meeting for prayer attended by Christians on the first Monday in each month, in which they offer their social supplications for the success of missions, the spread of the Gospel, and the conversion of the world to God. *All* the members of the church do not attend it. The *half* do not. No. The Concert has not yet secured the *majority* of the church. Even "the sacramental host" are not as yet in favor of the conversion of the world, if attendance on the Monthly Concert may be made the test, as I think with the utmost propriety it may; for surely he cannot have much of a desire for the world's conversion who will not meet once a month to express it in concert with other Christians. And this, I suppose, is the principal reason why the world is not converted, because the prayer-meetings of the church bear testimony that even *she* is not heartily in favor of it. O, when will the question, "Shall the world be converted?" be put to the church, and carried in the *affirmative?* There will be joy in heaven when that result is reported there; and then the work of the world's conversion will go rapidly forward, and nations be born in a day. Now, do *you* join in the concert, or are you one of those who make discord?

Many professors can say they *do* attend. I am glad so many can say it. You attend, but let me ask, do you *love* to attend? O! if you leave your

hearts at home, that is bad. We want the heart at the Monthly Concert. It spoils all if we have not the heart there to send up to heaven its sincere desires. "Prayer," you know, "is the heart's sincere desire." You attend, but do you attend *habitually;* or is it only *occasionally* that you go? Do you attend *twelve* times a year, if Providence interpose no obstacle? It is a *Monthly* Concert. It is intended that Christians should meet and pray together at least once a month. There are professors of religion who attend the Concert sometimes, perhaps on an average once in *three* months, and they think that is doing tolerably well. But what if others should do so! Then it would be no *Monthly* Concert, but a *Quarterly* Concert; and such it should be now to suit the practice of too many of the church. But I think once a month, or twelve times a year, is not too often for Christians to meet together to pray, "Our Father.....thy kingdom come." As a Christian, I *feel* that it is not too often, and I think, if I was a heathen, and knew all that is involved in being a heathen, I should feel like being prayed for by Christians at least once a month. O! it is not too often, either for us who pray, or for those for whom we pray. Then, fellow Christians, let us attend every month, bringing along with us each one a heart touched with gratitude, melted into pity, fervent with love, full of faith, and as sure as we live, we shall bless and be blessed.

"But they say it is not an interesting meeting." I don't know why it should be uninteresting to *Christians.* Is it because it is a *prayer* meeting; or because it is a prayer meeting *for others?* Does it lack interest because there is no *preaching*, and the very prayers are not for ourselves? Will the disciple of Jesus make this confession? Will he acknowledge that it takes away the interest of a meeting, when its character is so devotional, and its object so benevolent? It has been asked, "How shall we contrive to make the Monthly Concert interesting to the people?" It is only the people themselves that can make it interesting. Let them come to it. Let the members of the church appear in their places on that evening. Let conscience bring them, if inclination does not, and let him who is to preside in the meeting be cheered by the aspect of a full assembly, and the interest of the Monthly Concert is secured without the laying down of rules and observance of minute directions. Who ever found a well attended concert for prayer uninteresting?

But, one says, it sometimes rains, and I cannot attend. I know it sometimes rains, but do you never go out in the rain for any purpose? O Christian, if for anything you ever go through the rain, go through the rain to the Monthly Concert. I suspect the rain does not hinder you from fulfilling an important engagement with a fellow creature. Now, I know that you have not specifically engaged to

meet God at the Monthly Concert; but there are *vows* on you which, I am sure, include this. Are you not one of those who say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" waiting for his answer? His answer comprehends many things, and among them is this. Indeed, I think the duty of attending the Monthly Concert is included in the general obligation to go "into all the world," and "teach all nations;" and you consented to it when you made the *full surrender*. Therefore let not trifles detain you at home on the evening of the church's concert of prayer for the world. But if by necessity detained—if you go not, because on such a night you would go out for no purpose whatever, you can spend the hour in the closet praying for the world. That you will not fail to do. The closet is accessible in all weather. If you cannot go out to the prayer meeting, yet you can "enter into thy closet," and though your prayer will be a *solo*, it will be as grateful to God as the *concert* of others.

But some professors of religion never attend the Monthly Concert! What I propose to say to them I must reserve for another article.

11. Why all Christians should attend the Monthly Concert.

It is a fact well known and deeply deplored, that some professors of religion never attend the Monthly Concert. Perhaps they never attend any of the prayer-meetings of the church. It is not for me to say that such persons have no religion, though I must go so far as to say that I do not see how they can have a great deal. Nor does their religion appear to be of the *kind* contemplated in the New Testament. They may be Christians, but I am certain they are not *primitive* Christians. I do not, for my part, see how those who never meet with their fellow disciples for social prayer, can be acquitted of contemning that gracious promise of Christ, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." What an encouragement to *concerts of prayer* is conveyed in those words, "if two of you shall *agree!*" How can they be supposed to love the presence of the Savior, who are not desirous to meet him "where two or three are gathered together in his name!" If such disciples had existed at that time, of course they would not have attended the meetings for prayer which preceded the memorable day of Pentecost. They would not have gone to the "upper room." Perhaps they would have made some ex-

cuse for their absence. Perhaps not. One might have said that he could not bear the air of a crowded room. Another, that he did not see why he could not pray as well at home. There were no such despisers of the prayer meeting among the primitive disciples. They all frequented the upper room, "and *all* continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." O that it were so now! Fellow disciples of the blessed Jesus, listen to a few plain reasons why we should all attend the Monthly Concert.

1. It is a meeting of Christians. Should you not meet with Christians? God has made you *social* beings; and Christians are the best company. Should you not cultivate that kind of society on earth, with which you are to be associated for ever in heaven? The same class of persons—they that feared the Lord—used to meet together in the days of Malachi; and the Lord noted it down. Come then to the Concert.

2. It is a meeting of Christians for religious worship. The Concert is a *sacred* assembly. It invites not merely to mutual intercourse, but to intercourse with God and heaven. In it we meet one with another, that we may together meet the Lord; and if he kept a book of remembrance for them who feared him, and who met for *conference* with each other, will he not much more for those who meet for *communion* with himself?

3. It is the most interesting kind of religious meet-

.ng. It is a *prayer* meeting. Its exercises consist in prayer interspersed with praise. The song of gratitude and supplication of blessing ascend alternately. O it is good to be there! What Christian but loves the prayer meeting!

4. It is the most interesting of all prayer meetings. I had rather be absent from any other than from this. Think how *large* a concert it is—how many voices join in it, and hearts still more! From how many lands—in how many languages they pray, yet with one desire, and for a single *object*. Think of that object—its unity, its grandeur, its benevolence—a world lying in wickedness—the speedy conversion of that world to God! In the Monthly Concert Christians meet to express together to their God this one great benevolent desire. And ought not you to be there?

But what gives the greatest interest to the Concert is, that Christ himself in substance established it. Yes, he has taught us *so* to pray. His disciples asked him how they should pray, and he answered that they should *pray socially for the conversion of the world*, viz. that they should meet under circumstances which would justify the use of the plural number, "Our Father," &c. and thus met, that they should pray together, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Now, is not this just what we do in the Monthly Concert? We put in practice that lesson of Christ on prayer

That is the amount of it. The missionary concert has then the sanction of the Master, however some of his professed disciples may regard it. Is it so? Then I ask not, will you come to the Concert, but how can you stay away?

5. It is good to draw near to God in prayer for a guilty and dying world. Christians find it so. If they benefit no others, yet they benefit themselves. God bestows blessing on them while they implore blessing for others.

6. It is kind to the poor heathen thus to meet once a month and pray that they may possess the same Gospel of the grace of God, which has brought salvation to us. If we were in their situation, and knew what it was to be in such a situation, we should wish Christians to pray for us. And shall not we, being Christians, pray for them? The golden rule requires it. The love of Christ constrains to it. How shall we not pray for them? How shall I be able to answer for it, I say not to God, but to my poor pagan brother that I shall meet before the bar of our common Judge, if I let him go into eternity without even praying that the light of the Gospel may illuminate his dark mind? How shall I be able to bear his reproachful recognition of me as a Christian? I will take care not to lie under the accusation. I will pray for him.

7. Nothing so cheers the hearts of our missionaries, and nothing so encourages them in their work,

as when they hear of well attended Concerts. So they tell us; and they write back that nothing they meet with on the field of their labors depresses and discourages them so much as the intelligence they receive from home, that Christians neglect the Monthly Concert, and few of the churches meet to pray for them. They know that they cannot succeed without God, and they know that it is prayer which engages God to work effectually with them. O, if we could but send them word by the next ships that go, that Christians in crowds come up to the missionary prayer meeting, and the place of the Monthly Concert is thronged; they would be able, I have no doubt, to send us word back, perhaps by those very ships returning, that the heathen in crowds gather around them inquiring the way of salvation, and that many have gone even unto Christ, and become partakers of his grace. But in vain shall we expect to hear very cheering intelligence from them, while the intelligence they receive from us is no more cheering. O, it is base treatment of our missionary brethren and sisters, as well as gross dereliction of the duty imposed by the Savior's last command, not to meet and pray for them.

But why should I multiply reasons? Will you not attend henceforth? If, after all, you will not, I can only say I am sorry—sorry on two accounts—sorry for the heathen, and sorry for you.

12. Will any Christian be absent from the next Concert?

The Monthly Concert of prayer for the success of Missions and the salvation of the world. I wonder, indeed, that any Christian is ever *voluntarily* absent from that prayer meeting; but, from that of Monday next, what Christian, *that is a Christian*, can of choice absent himself? Why? What particular attraction will there be in the next Concert, that a Christian should attend that, if never another? Do you ask? Can you not imagine? Have you not heard the news brought by the last ship from eastern and southern Asia? When came a ship so freighted with tidings? MORRISON IS DEAD. What Christian will not go to the next Concert, if for no other reason, to offer praise to God that Morrison lived, and lived so long, and was enabled to accomplish the magnificent work of translating the word of God into the language read and spoken by one third of human kind?

But that is not all the news the ship brought. It came fraught with *heavy tidings*. How many tears have already been shed at the recital, tears of grief for the dead, and tears of sympathy for the living—the widows—and the mothers, for one, perhaps each, left a mother. LYMAN and MUNSON, in the flower of their youth, and on the threshhold of their labors have fallen, not the subject of nature's gradual decay, nor by some fell eastern disease, but the victims of

violence, the food of cannibals! This is something new. We have never before had intelligence like this from our missionary fields. We have never had so loud a call in Providence to the Concert. What Christian will not obey it, and go on Monday to weep as well as praise, and to mingle with tears and praises, prayer for those poor brutal men that did the deed, and for them whose hearts it has so deeply stricken? And what Christian, who properly estimates his privileges, and duly regards his obligations, will not, on that occasion, let fall some drops of sorrow for his past remissness in praying for Missionaries?

I have said to myself since I heard of this outrage, "So much for not attending the Monthly Concert—so much for not praying more for Missionaries." I may be mistaken. The reader will judge. But so it has struck me. The church sent out these Missionaries, and many more than half of her reputed children have never met to pray for them! Whether the same remembered them in the closet and around the fireside I cannot say, but I fear they did not.

There is one most touching part of the melancholy tale. It is related that one of the Missionaries, I hope we shall never know which it was, was killed and eaten first, the other being compelled to be a spectator of the whole savage ceremony, with the knowledge that he was reserved for a similar fate. How he must have felt! Poor dear brother, I fear we never

prayed for thee as we ought. *You* could go from country, and home, and mother, to seek a spot in savage Sumatra to plant the cross and preach Jesus, while *we* could not once a month leave our firesides long enough just to go and pray for you, that God would protect you and give you favor in the sight of the heathen. O this neglect of the Monthly Concert is a *cruel* thing! This forgetfulness to pray for Missionaries, how dwelleth the love of God in the same heart with it? Perhaps this was one of the multitude of thoughts that passed through his mind while he waited to be sacrificed, and while he perceived that God, though with him to support and to save him, was not with him to protect him from the fierceness of man. Perhaps he thought, "O if Christians had been more uniformly and earnestly mindful of us in the closet, the family, and the Concert, the hand that holds even the savage heart, might have turned it to pity, and spared us. But his will be done. Bitter as is the cup we drink, it is not so bitter as the cup that was drank for us." Let us all go to the coming Concert, and humble ourselves together; and from his humiliation let each pray, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation."

13. How Came it to Pass?

That three thousand were converted on the day of Pentecost—how came it to pass? The truth as it is in Jesus was preached, and the power of God accompanied and made the truth effectual. But had not the meeting for prayer, of which mention is made in Acts, 1 : 14, a close and influential connection with the glorious results of that day and that discourse? Undoubtedly it had. But what was there in that meeting of the hundred and twenty disciples, to exert an influence to the conversion of three thousand individuals? Whence had it that power? I answer, it was a *prayer* meeting—*professedly* and *mainly* a prayer meeting. If it had been a meeting for *preaching*, it would not have exerted the influence it did, even though prayer had preceded and followed the sermon. It was a prayer meeting—a meeting of Christians to express their dependence on God; unitedly to call on him for his blessing; to plead the promise, and to wait for the fulfillment of it. Those are the *efficient* meetings, in which Christians meet and agree to ask of God. I wonder they do not value them more. To the prayer meeting Christians come, to exercise the high privilege of intercession for others—to do good and to communicate—to act the "more blessed" part; whereas, to meetings of another kind, they go for the less bene-

volent purpose of receiving good. Yet Christians value no meetings so little as prayer meetings! And, O shame, no prayer meeting do they value so little as that which Christ himself may be said to have established in saying, "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come"—the Monthly Concert. Though it occur but once a month, and though our Savior, in the prayer he has given us, has expressly instructed us to *pray socially for the conversion of the world*, yet how attended! I pity the heathen, that so few are disposed to meet to pray for them For the church, I blush that it should be so.

But the influence of that meeting of a hundred and twenty was not owing entirely to its being a prayer meeting. Many meetings for prayer are held, and no such effects follow. There must have been something *peculiar* about that prayer meeting, to account for its efficacy. There was *much* by which it was distinguished from ordinary prayer meetings. The mention of some of these peculiarities may be of service. It may provoke imitation in some churches.

1. *All* the church attended that prayer meeting. "These *all* continued," &c. There were but a hundred and twenty disciples, and they were all present. Not a member of the church was absent, unless providentially detained. How different is it now! Now, if so many as a hundred and twenty can be collected in a prayer meeting, yet they represent perhaps a

church of five or six hundred communicants, and all the rest are with one accord absent. They who meet may *agree* among themselves to ask for an outpouring of the Spirit, but it is, after all, but the agreement of a *minority* of the church. The majority, by their absence, *dissent* from the request.

2. As *all* attended, of course the *men* attended as well as the women. Yes, every *male* member of the church was present; and I suppose the males were more than one half of the whole number. They did not leave it to the women to sustain the prayer meetings. That prayer meeting had not the aspect of many a modern prayer meeting, in which almost all are of the weaker sex.

3. The most *distinguished* members of the church attended, as well as the most obscure. There were all the apostles, and "Mary the mother of Jesus," and "his brethren." None of them felt above being at a prayer meeting. How is it now? Let that question answer itself.

4. They were all agreed— "of one accord," as it is said. Not merely agreed as touching what they should ask, viz. the fulfillment of "the promise of the Father," but of *one mind* generally—aye, and of *one heart*. They thought and felt alike. They all loved one another. They observed the new commandment. Such cordial union among Christians has great power with God. It does not always exist in our prayer meetings.

5. They *persevered* in prayer. "These all *continued* in prayer." First they stirred themselves up to take *hold* on God, and then they said, "We will not let thee go, except thou bless us." They met often for prayer, and all met, and they lingered long at the throne of grace. There were not some who came to the meeting *once* for a wonder, or only *occasionally*. No; "these *all continued*," &c. It is not so now. But how long did they continue asking? Until they obtained; and then they did but pass from the note of prayer to that of praise. They sought the Lord until he came. It is time we all should do it. They were together—*holding meeting*—when the Spirit descended.

I think if *all* our church members would *habitually* attend the prayer meetings, *men* as well as women, *rich* as well as poor, and be "of one accord" in heart, as well as in judgment, and would *continue* in prayer, they would not wait in vain for "the promise of the Father." O for such prayer meetings! But now they are despised by many. How often we hear it said, *It is nothing but a prayer meeting!* Nothing but! I should like, for my part, to know what *surpasses* a prayer meeting. And often on what unworthy conditions do those *called* Christians suspend their attendance. They must know who is to conduct the meeting, who will probably lead in prayer, and from whom a word of exhortation may be expected; and if the meeting is not likely to be

to their mind, they will not attend it. This thing ought not so to be.

---

14. Why the World is not Converted.

The world *is not* converted. The melancholy fact stares us in the face. Yet the world *is to be* converted. That delightful truth shines conspicuous on the pages of the Bible. Why is it not already converted? It *ought* to have been converted ere this. Eighteen centuries ago it *was* well nigh converted. But *now* the world is far, very far from being converted. It "lieth in wickedness." What is the meaning of it? *Why* is it not converted? Whose is the fault? Look not up to heaven with the inquiry, as if the reason was to be found there, among the mysteries of the eternal Mind. Look elsewhere. The fact we deplore results not from any lack of benevolent disposition in God. No. "God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What could he have *felt* or *done* more? The *object* of his love, the world—its *gift*, his Son! Could it have been more comprehensive, or more munificent? Nor is the reason found in any deficiency in the atonement made by Christ, for

he is the propitiation "for the sins of the *whole world*," the Lamb of God who "taketh away the sin of the *world*." Nor is it owing to any limitation in the commission of the Holy Spirit; for of him it is testified, that when he should come, he should "reprove *the world* of sin": and the commission to the *human* agents of the work was as extensive, "Go ye into *all the world*—preach the Gospel to *every creature*—teach *all nations*." And the promise of the presence and power of Christ to be with them is also without restriction. See what goes before, and what comes after that great commission. The words which precede it are, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." The words which follow, are, "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." You must look some where else than *upward* for the reason why the world is not converted. Look *beneath*, *around*, *within*.

I propose to assign a few reasons why the world is not converted.

1. The *world* does not wish to be converted. That which is to be the subject of conversion, is a foe to it. It resists the influence that would convert it to God. What means that language, "My Spirit shall not always *strive* with man?" *Striving* implies opposition offered. The opposition is made by the *will*. The universal will of man resists the work of the Spirit of God. And that thing, the will, is a tremendous obstacle opposed to conversion. It is

more than a match for all the motives you can bring to bear upon it. It wont move for motives. The Lord alone can master it. O! if the world had of itself been willing to be converted, it should long ere this have been brought back to God! It is but to be willing and the thing is done.

2. The *devil*, who in the Bible is called "the god of this world," is opposed to its conversion. Now, it must be very much in the way of the world's conversion, that not only itself but its god is opposed to it. The will is a powerful foe of itself, but when the will is in league with Satan, who is called *the adversary*, by way of eminence, what an enemy the combination must produce! The devil and the heart, what a formidable alliance! Satan is *sincere* in his opposition to the conversion of the world, i. e. he is *really* opposed to it. He does not merely pretend to be. And he is *in earnest*. His *heart* is in the work of opposing the world's conversion—and *he does all he can* to prevent it. The *friends* of the conversion of the world do *not* all *they* can to *promote* it. Would that they did! But Satan does all he *can* to prevent it. Ah, why cannot we do as much for Christ as his enemies do against him? Why don't Christians do all *they* can? Satan does all he can—and that is a great deal, for he was one of those angels "that excel in strength," and though by his fall he lost all holiness, he lost no *power*. He is as potent as ever—possessed of very great energy,

and he exerts it all in the enterprise of opposing God in the conversion of the world. And he does not stand still and exert his power, but goeth "to and fro in the earth." Yea, "as a roaring lion, *walketh about, seeking* whom he may devour." He does not *wait* for his prey, but *hunts* for it. Yet he has not always the lion look, for sometimes "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light;" nor does he always *roar*. He can let his voice down to the softest whisper, which the ear he breathes it into alone can hear; and Satan does not act alone. He is assisted by myriads of kindred spirits. They were *many*, we are told, that possessed one man—yes, a *legion*. How many they must be in all! and all engaged in the same opposition—aye, and multitudes of *men* are even now in league with them, engaged in the devils' work as heartily as if they were of that race. Is not this a strong reason why the world is not converted? Have I not given *two* such reasons? But I have a stronger:

3. The *church* is not heartily in favor of the world's conversion. And when I affirm this of the church, I refer not to those who rest in the form of godliness, and have but a nominal life. No wonder the unconverted, though they may be members of the visible church, should not be concerned for the conversion of others. But I mean that real Christians, who have themselves been converted, are not heartily in favor of it. Yes, the converted part of the

world are not heartily in favor of the conversion of the great remainder! And this is the *principal* reason why it is not converted. What if the world is not in favor of it, and Satan is not? It was never intended that the world should be converted by their instrumentality, but in spite of their opposition! But that the church, to whom is given the commission, to whom is committed the instrumentality which God blesses for conversion, and to whom even Christ looks with expectation, should not enter into the work with all her soul and strength, how strange and how lamentable! I know that Christians say they are in favor of it, and I will not question their sincerity, but I wish they gave such proof of being sincere and in earnest as Satan and his allies do. Actions have a tongue, and they speak louder than words. Satan's actions declare unequivocally that he is a foe to the world's conversion. Do our actions proclaim as unequivocally that we are its friends? *We* say we desire the world's conversion; but what say our *prayers*, our *contributions*, our *efforts*, our *conduct?* We *talk* as if we desired it, but do we *pray*, do we *contribute*, do we *labor*, do we *live* as if we desired it? In this matter our unsupported word will not be received as proof.

Why, if we who love the Lord are heartily in favor of the world's becoming his, are we so *divided among ourselves?* The enemies of the world's conversion are united. Yes, *they* forget their private

differences when the cause of Jesus is to be attacked, and one heart animates the whole infernal host. But the friends of the great enterprise are divided, and much of their force is spent in skirmishes among themselves, while the common enemy in the meantime is permitted to make an almost unresisted progress. It is a pity, a great pity. It ought not to be so. The great aggressive enterprise of the world's conversion demands all our resources, and yet we are expending them in mutual assaults. When will it be otherwise? When will Christians agree on a *truce* among themselves, and march in one mighty phalanx against the world, to the service to which the Captain of salvation calls them? When shall it once be? I do not know, but I do know that when it takes place, the *first* of the *thousand* years will not be far off.

Fellow-soldiers of the cross! what are we about? Let us *form*. Let us put on our complete armor. Some of us are not in full panoply. And let us sing together one of the songs of Zion, and to that music let us march on to the conquest of the world for Jesus. He is already in the field, let us hasten to his support. Let us go to his help against the mighty. Let us leave *all*, even our mutual dissensions, suspicions and jealousies, and follow him—and presently the world shall be converted.

15. The Conversion of the Church.

We hear a great deal now-a-days about the conversion of the world. It is in almost every Christian's mouth; and we cannot be too familiar with the phrase—we cannot be too diligent to promote the thing. It ought to have our daily thoughts, prayers, and efforts. It deserves our hearts. It is the great object of Christianity. But there is another community besides the world, which I think needs to undergo a measure of the same process that the world so much needs. It is the *church.* While the conversion of the world is made so prominent, I think we ought not to overlook the *conversion of the church,* especially since this comes first in order.

Every thing, we know, begins at the house of God, both in judgment and mercy. But what do I mean by the conversion of the church? Is not the church converted already? Suppose I admit that; may she not need a new conversion? Regeneration is but once, but conversion may be many times. Peter had been converted when Christ said to him, "and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." There is no doubt the church might be converted again, and that without any injury to her.

But why do I think the church needs conversion? I might give several reasons, but I will assign only

one. It is founded on Matthew, 18:3: "Except ye be converted, and *become as little children.*" Here we see the effect of conversion is to make the subjects of it as little children, and hence St. John addresses the primitive Christians as little children. Now my reason for thinking the church needs conversion is, that there does not seem to be much of the little child about the church of the present day. There is a great deal more of "the old man" about it, I am afraid. I think if John were living now, he would not be apt to address the members of the church generally as "little children." No indeed. I question whether, if he were even addressing an assembly of the ministers and officers of many of our churches, he would not be apt to apply other terms than "little children" as a preface to his exhortation "love one another," which I am sure he would not forget.

Little children are *humble*, but humility is not a remarkable characteristic of the church of the present day. I don't think the scholars of either of the schools have got the lesson of lowliness very perfectly from their Master. I fear, if the Master were to come in upon us now, he would be likely to chide many in both the schools. Why two schools? There is but one Master.

How *confiding* little children are, and how ready to believe on the bare word of one in whom they have reason to feel confidence, and especially if he

be a father! But not so the church. "Thus saith the Lord" does not satisfy her sons now. They must have better reasons for believing than that. They must hear first what he has to say, and then see if they can get a confirmation of it from any quarter before they will believe it. How unceremoniously many of these children treat some of the things which their Father very evidently says, because they do not strike them as in accordance with reason, justice, or common sense!

How *docile* the little child is! Mary, who "sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word," was such a child. Never a *why* or a *how* asked she of him. I cannot say so much for the church of our day. *Simplicity* also characterizes little children. How open and artless they are—how free from guile. Such was *Nathanael.* Whether this trait of character be conspicuous in the church now, let the reader say.

Little children are moreover characterized by *love*, and their charity "thinketh no evil." How unsuspicious they are! But too much of the charity of the present day, so far from thinking no evil, thinketh no *good.* It suspects every body. It "hopeth" nothing. Indeed *love*, and her sister *peace*, which used to lead the graces, are become as *wall-flowers* with many; into such neglect they have fallen. They seem to be quite out of the question with many. Some good men appear to think that contending for the faith is the end of the commandment

and the fulfilling of the law. But it is not. It is a duty, an important duty—one too little regarded by many—one never to be sneered at as by some it is. I acknowledge some treat it as if it were nothing. *I* only say it is not every thing. There is *walking in love*, and *following peace*, which, as well as *contending for the faith*, are unrepealed laws of Christ's house. I believe they can all be done, and that each is best done when the others are not neglected. I am sure *truth* never lost any thing by being spoken *in love*. I am of opinion that a principal reason why we are not more of one mind, is that we are not more of one heart. How soon they who feel heart to heart, begin to see eye to eye! The way to think alike is first to feel alike; and if the feeling be love, the thought will be truth. I wish, therefore, for the sake of sound doctrine, that the brethren could love one another. What if we see error in each other to condemn, can we not find any thing amiable to love? I would the experiment might be made. Let us not cease to contend for the faith—not merely for its own sake, but for love's sake, because "faith worketh by love." But, in the conflict, let us be careful to shield love. It is a victory for truth scarcely worth gaining, if charity be left bleeding on the field of battle.

You see why I think the church wants converting. It is to bring her back to humility, and simplicity, and love. I wish she would attend to this matter. She need not relax her efforts for the world.

She has time enough to turn a few reflex acts on herself The object of the church is to make the world like herself. But let her in the meantime make herself more like what the world ought to be. It is scarcely desirable that the world should be as the church in general now is. Let her become a better model for the world's imitation. Her voice is heard for Christ; but let her "hold forth the word of life" in her *conduct*, as well as by her voice. Let her light shine. Let her good works be manifest. Let her heaven-breathed spirit breathe abroad the same spirit.

The work of the conversion of the world goes on slowly; but it makes as much progress as the work of the conversion of the church does. No more sinners are converted, because no more Christians are converted. The world will continue to lie in wickedness, while "the ways of Zion mourn" as they do. Does any one wonder that iniquity abounds, when the love of so many has waxed cold? We are sending the light of truth abroad, when we have but little of the warmth of love at home.

We are often asked what we are doing for the conversion of the world. We ought to be doing a great deal—all we can. But I would ask, what are we doing for the conversion of the church? What to promote holiness nearer home, among our fellow-Christians and in our own hearts? Let us not forget the world, but at the same time let us remember Zion.

16. Inquiring Saints.

I was asked the other day whether I had had any recent meeting for inquirers. I replied that I had not —that there were few inquiring sinners in the congregation, and I judged the reason to be, that there were few inquiring *saints.* "Inquiring saints! that is a *new* phrase. We always supposed that *inquiring* belonged exclusively to sinners." But it is not so. Do we not read in Ezekiel, 36 : 37, "Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be *inquired* of by the house of Israel to do it for them?" *By the house of Israel,* that is, by his people—by the church. You see that God requires and expects his covenanted people to inquire. It is true that saints do not make the same inquiry that sinners do. The latter ask what they must do to be saved, whereas the inquiry of Christians is, "Wilt thou not revive us again?" It is a blessed state of things when the people of God are inquiring. It is good for themselves, and it has a most benign influence on others. When the people of God inquire, presently the impenitent begin to inquire. That question, "Wilt thou not revive us?" is soon followed by the other, "What must I do to be saved?" Yes, when saints become anxious, it is not long ere sinners become anxious. The inquiry of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" was preceded by the

inquiry of the one hundred and twenty, who "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." Generally, I suppose, that is the *order*. First saints inquire, and *then* sinners. And whenever, in any congregation, religion does not flourish, one principal reason of it is that the saints are not inquiring. *They* do not attend *their* inquiry meeting appointed for them. The saints' inquiry meeting is the prayer meeting. In that Christians meet together to inquire of the Lord "to do it for them," that is, to fulfill the promise about the new heart and the new spirit, of which he had been speaking. Now, when this meeting is crowded and interesting —when the inquiry among Christians is general, and earnest, and importunate, the sinners' inquiry meeting usually becomes crowded and interesting.

O that I could make my voice to be heard by all the dear people of God in the land on this subject. I would say, "You wonder and lament that sinners do not inquire. But, are *you* inquiring? You wonder that they do not *feel*. But do *you* feel? Can you expect a heart of *stone* to feel, when a heart of *flesh* does not? You are surprised that sinners can sleep. It is because you sleep along side of them. Do you but awake, and bestir yourselves, and look up and cry to God, and you will see how soon they will begin to be roused, and to look about them, and to ask the meaning of your solicitude." O that the saints would but inquire! That is what I want to see.

We hear a good deal said about the *anxious seat.* Concerning the propriety of the thing signified by that not very elegant expression, we will not now dispute, especially since that seat is at present pretty much *vacant* every where. I only wish that the place where Christians sit were a more anxious seat than it is.

Neither will I engage in pending controversy about *measures*, new and old. What I fear most from the controversy is that it will cause many to become no measure men. I do not know why we want so many measures, if we will only make good use of those we have. There are two measures, which, if generally adopted and faithfully applied, will, I think, answer every purpose. You may call them *new* or *old.* They are both. They are *old*, yet, like the new commandment and the new song of which we read in the Bible, *ever new.* The *first* is, the measure of plain evangelical preaching "in season, out of season," and "not with wisdom of words." The *other* is the measure of united and fervent prayer, such as preceded the memorable events of the day of Pentecost. I am for these *old, yet ever-new* measures. O that the brethren of every name would take fast hold of these measures and hold on to them. I think then we should not want many more measures. *Praying and preaching* used to be "mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds." I am sure they will never fail. Let us employ them.

17. Do you Pay for a Religious Newspaper?

I was going to ask the question in another form. "Do you *read* a religious newspaper?" but then I reflected that many read a religious newspaper who do not themselves subscribe for one, they being in the habit of borrowing from their neighbors, and after sending and respectfully soliciting the loan of the paper before the family have read it, and not unfrequently keeping it a length of time greater than the golden rule will exactly justify. Then I had like to have thrown the question into this shape: "Do you *subscribe* for a religious newspaper?" but it struck me all at once, that some subscribe for a paper, but do not *pay* for it. I have heard this complaint made, and I have no doubt there is foundation enough for it. I, for my part, would advise such persons to take a *moral* newspaper, if they can find such a thing. *That* is the sort of paper they require. A religious newspaper is quite too far advanced for them. I don't know, and cannot conceive why these non-payers want to read a religious newspaper. I should suppose they would be satisfied with *secular* newspapers. I can imagine that they may desire, notwithstanding their delinquency, to know what is going on in the world, but why they should care to know how things go in the church, I cannot conjecture. What do those who do not give any thing for value received, want to know about revivals, mis

sions, &c.? Here are persons who would starve editors, publishers, printers, and paper-makers—the whole concern—into a premature grave!—who say, "Send me your paper," implying of course that they will send the money in return, yet never send it; and yet they want to know all about the progress that is making in converting souls to God, and what is doing among the heathen. Is not this strange, that having never learned as yet to practice the first and easiest lesson of honesty, they should wish to read every thing about godliness and vital piety! So I concluded to head the article, "Do you *pay* for a religious newspaper?"

Do you, reader? If you do, continue to take and read, and pay for it; and be slow to withdraw your subscription. Give up many things before you give up your religious newspaper. If any one that ought to take such a paper, does not, I hope that some one to whom the circumstance is known, will volunteer the loan of this to him, directing his attention particularly to this article. Who is he? A professor of religion? It cannot be. A professor of religion and not taking a religious newspaper! A member of the visible church, and voluntarily without the means of information as to what is going on in that church! A follower of Christ, praying daily, as taught by his Master, "Thy kingdom come," and yet not knowing, nor caring to know, what progress that kingdom is making! Here is one of those to whom Christ

said, "Go, teach all nations;" he bears a part of the responsibility of the world's conversion, and yet, so far from doing any thing himself, he does not even know what others are doing in promoting this great enterprise! Ask him about missionary stations and operations, and he can tell you nothing. He does not read about them. I am afraid this professor of religion does not love "the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob." Ah, he forgets thee, O Jerusalem!

But I must not fail to ask if this person takes a *secular* newspaper. O, certainly he does. He must know what is going on in the world; and how else is he to know it? It is pretty clear then that he takes a deeper interest in the world than he does in the church; and this being the case, it is not difficult to say where his heart is. He pays perhaps eight or ten dollars for a secular paper—a paper that tells him about the world, but for one that records Zion's conflicts and victories, he is unwilling to pay two or three! How can a professor of religion answer for this discrimination in favor of the world? how defend himself against the charge it involves? He cannot do it; and he had better not try, but go or write immediately and subscribe for some good religious paper; and to be certain of paying for it, let him pay *in advance*. There is a satisfaction when one is reading an interesting paper, to reflect that it is paid for.

But perhaps you take a paper, and are in arrears for it. Now suppose you was the publisher, and the publisher was one of your subscribers, and *he* was in arrears to you, what would you think he ought to do in that case? I just ask the question. I don't care about an answer.

---

18. Detached Thoughts.

It is not every broken heart which constitutes the sacrifice of God. It depends on what has broken it—whether the experience of misfortune, or the sense of sin—the sorrow of the world, or the sorrow of God. Both break the heart, but it is a different fracture in one case from what it is in the other. God values the latter; and hearts so broken he mends and makes whole.

Some sinners repent with an *unbroken* heart. They are *sorry*, and yet go on, as did Pilate and Herod.

A sinner must *come to himself*, as did the prodigal, before ever he will come to Christ.

The consummation of madness is to do what, at the time of doing it, we intend to be afterwards sorry for; the deliberate and intentional making of work for repentance.

When a Christian backslides, it is as if the prodigal son had re-acted his folly, and left his father's house a second time.

There is a mighty difference betwixt feeling "I have done wrong," and feeling "I have sinned *against* the Lord."

Some sinners lay down their burden elsewhere than at the feet of Jesus.

Ministers should aim in preaching to *puncture* the heart, rather than *tickle* the ear.

He who waits for repentance, waits for what cannot be had so long as it is waited for. It is absurd for a man to wait for that which he has himself to do.

Human friends can weep with us when we weep, but Jesus is a friend, who, when he has wept with us, can wipe away all our tears. And when the vale of tears terminates in the valley of the shadow of death, and other friends are compelled to retire and leave us to go alone, Jesus is the friend who can and will enter and go all the way through with us.

It is better for us that Christ should be in heaven than on earth. We need him more there than here. We want an advocate *at court.*

When a family party are going home, it is common for one to go before to make all ready for the rest, and to welcome them. "I go to prepare a place for you," says Christ to his disciples.

Procrastination has been called a thief—the thief of time. I wish it were no worse than a thief. It

is a murderer; and that which it kills is not time merely, but the immortal soul.

Surely the subject of religion must be the most important of all subjects, since it is presently to become, and ever after to continue to be, the only and all-absorbing subject.

The obstacle in the way of the sinner's conversion possesses all the *force and invincibleness* of an *inability*, with all the *freeness and criminality* of an indisposition.

In vain will sinners call upon the rocks and mountains to hide them. Nature will not interpose to screen the enemies of her God.

What strange *servants* some Christians are!—always at work for themselves, and never doing any thing for Him whom they call their Master! And what *subjects!*—ever desiring to take the reins of government into their own hands!

It is one of the worst of errors, that there is another path of safety besides that of *duty*.

The man who lives in vain, lives *worse* than in vain. He who lives to *no* purpose, lives to a *bad* purpose.

The danger of the impenitent is regularly and rapidly increasing, as his who is in the midst of a burning building, or under the power of a fatal disease.

How many indulge a hope which they dare not examine!

If the mere delay of hope—hope deferred, makes the heart sick, what will the death of hope—its final and total disappointment—despair, do to it?

The *brightest blaze of intelligence* is of incalculably less value than the *smallest spark of charity*.

The sublimest thoughts are conceived by the intellect when it is excited by pious emotion.

There are many shining lights, which are not also burning lights.

Those may hope to be saved at the eleventh hour, who, when called at that hour can plead, that it is their call; who can say, when asked why they stand idle, "Because no man hath hired us."

Some never begin to pray till God has ceased to hear.

The Christian's feeling himself weak, makes him strong.

Genuine benevolence is not stationary, but *peripatetic*. It *goeth* about doing good.

Preparation for meeting God ought to be made first, not only because it is most important, but because it may be needed first. We may want nothing so much as religion. It is the only thing that is necessary, *certainly*, *exceedingly*, *indispensably* and *immediately*.

Some things, which could not otherwise be read in the book of nature, are legible enough in it when the lamp of revelation is held up to it.

It is easier to do a great deal of mischief than to accomplish a little good.

No man will ever fully find out what he is by a mere *survey* of himself. He must *explore*, if he would know himself.

When a man wants nothing, he asks for every thing.

---

19. The late Mr. Wirt.

The distinguished man whose name introduces this article, and who for so long a time filled so large a place in the public eye and mind, has passed away from the admiring view of mortals. We shall never again behold on earth his noble figure, but his memory shall long, long be cherished in the choicest place of the heart. His history in part belongs to the *nation*. Let others, more competent to the task, write that, while I make a brief record of that portion of his earthly story which connects him with the *church*. Few names have ever been written on earth in larger and more brilliant letters; but his name was written also in heaven—he had a record on high. Mr. Wirt was a Christian. He aspired to that "highest style" of humanity, and by divine grace he reached it.

The writer of this was for many years familiar with the religious history of Mr. Wirt. From the

first of his acquaintance with him, he always found him disposed to listen and learn on the subject of religion, even from those who were very far inferior to him in intellect and general information. I never knew a man more open, candid, docile, than he; and yet, for every thing which he admitted, he required a reason. His faith was implicit towards God, when he had ascertained that it was to God he was listening; but his understanding refused to bow to man. There was a time, when, it is believed, he had doubts in regard to the truth of the Christian religion; but, inquiring and examining, his doubts departed, and his mind rested in the confident belief, for which he was ever ready to render a reason, that God had made a revelation to man, and that the Bible contains that revelation. Perhaps this work of conviction was not fully wrought in him until some years ago, when, with the greatest satisfaction and profit, as he has often said to the writer, he read "Horne's Introduction to the Critical Study of the Holy Scriptures," a work which many have read at his recommendation, and with like results.

But Mr. Wirt was not satisfied while the faith of Christianity had possession of his intellect alone. He was aware that it equally deserved a place in his affections; and having long yielded to Christ the homage of his understanding, he at length opened to him that other department of the man, and received him into his *heart*.

It was in the summer of 1831, that, on a profession of faith and repentance, he became connected with the First Presbyterian Church of Baltimore, of which he remained a consistent and exemplary member until his death.

Shortly after his union to the church, the writer of this received from him a letter, from which he thinks it will be gratifying to the Christian public that he should make the following extracts. They show, among other things, what views this great man had been taught by the Spirit of God to entertain of the human character and heart. He writes from the *Sweet Springs* of Virginia.

"My mind has been too much occupied by the petty every-day cares of a residence at a public watering-place, or traveling and tossing over rough roads, for that continuous and systematic meditation and cultivation of religious feelings which I know to be my duty, and which I think I should find a delightful duty; but perhaps I deceive myself in this, for I have no faith in the fair dealing of this heart of mine with myself. I feel the want of that supreme love of my God and Savior for which I pray. I feel the want of that warming, purifying, elevating love, that sanctifying and cheering spirit which supports the Christian in his warfare with the world, the flesh, and the great enemy of our souls. Yet let me not be ungrateful. I have some sweet moments. My affections do some-

times take wing among these great works of God that surround me, and rise to their Creator, and I think with gratitude on that transcendantly greater work of his, the salvation of a guilty and fallen world by the death and mediation of his only Son. But indeed I am an exceedingly poor and weak Christian; and I often fear, too often for my peace, that there is at least nothing of the vitality of religion about me, and that I may have mistaken the burning of some of those vapors that fume from an ardent imagination, for that strong, steady and ever-during fire which animates the Christian, and bears him triumphant on his course. God only knows how this matter is. I think I am endeavoring to be sincere. But I may be mistaken, and it may turn out at last to be only one of those stratagems which the arch-enemy plays off upon us to our ruin. But even this apprehension again may be one of his stratagems to make me despond, and thus defeat the operation of the Spirit.

Alas! with how many enemies are we beset—treachery within and without. Nothing remains for us but to watch and to pray, lest we enter into temptation. God forbid that the public profession which I have made of religion should redound to the dishonor of his cause. It is the fear of this which has so long held me back, and not the fear of man. I am grieved to learn that my having gone to the Lord's table has got into the papers. It is no fit

subject for a paper. Of what consequence is it to the cause of Christ that such a poor reptile as myself should have acknowledged him before other worms of the dust like myself. I feel humbled and startled at such an annunciation. It will call the eyes of a hypercritical and malignant world upon me, and, I fear, tend more to tarnish than to advance the cause."

In another part of the letter he writes: "I long for more fervor in prayer—for more of the love and Spirit of God shed abroad in my heart—for more of his presence throughout the day—for a firmer anchorage in Christ, to keep this heart of mine and its affections from tossing to and fro on the waves of this world and the things of time and sense—for a brighter and a stronger faith—and some assurance of my Savior's acceptance and love. I feel as if he could not love me—that I am utterly unworthy of his love—that I have not one loveable point or quality about me—but that, on the contrary, he must still regard me as an alien to his kingdom and a stranger to his love. But, with the blessing of God, I will persevere in seeking him, relying on his promise, that if I come to him, he will in no wise cast me off."

It may not be uninteresting to mention that the favorite *religious* authors of Mr. W. were *Watts* and *Jay*. More recently he became acquainted with the writings of *Flavel*, and the subject of the last

conversation I had with him was Flavel's "Saint Indeed," which he had just been reading with great interest.

---

20. Traveling on the Sabbath.

How few men act from principle! How few have any *rule*, by which they uniformly regulate their conduct! Fewer still act from *christian* principle—regard a rule derived from revelation. It makes my very heart bleed to think how few, even of civilized and evangelized men, *regard divine authority*. And yet it is the disregard of this which constitutes the sinner and the rebel. Some disregard one expression of it, and some another. He who, whatever respect he may profess for God, *practically* disregards *any* expression of divine authority, is a revolter—a rebel; is up in heart, if not in arms, against God; is engaged in a controversy with Jehovah.

What has let me into this train of reflection, is the general disregard that I observe with respect to the sanctification of the Sabbath. He who made us, and who, by constantly preserving us, when otherwise we should relapse into non-existence, may be said to be continually renewing the creation of us, and has

beyond all question a right to control us, did long ago, from Sinai, distinctly express his will with regard to the manner in which the *seventh* portion of time should be spent, and how it should be distinguished from the other six portions. He reminded his creatures of it, and declared it to be his will that it should be kept holy; that six days we should labor, and therein do *all* our work, leaving *none* of it to be done on the seventh, because the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord our God. It is his *rest*, and therefore should be ours also. In it he has signified it to be his will that we should not do *any work;* neither we, nor those who are subject to us as children or as servants, nor even those transiently domesticated with us, the strangers within our gates. Nor should man alone rest, but the *beast* also. Then he condescends to give a reason for this enactment, in which all mankind, whenever and wherever they live, are equally interested—a reason which was valid from the creation of the world, and will hold good as long as the world lasts; "for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; *wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Now, God has never revoked this expression of his will. He has never repealed this law. If he has, *when* did he it, and where is the record of its repeal? He has not taken off the blessing which he laid on

the Sabbath. He has not obliterated the distinction which he put on the seventh portion of time. He has not said, "You need no longer remember the Sabbath to keep it holy—seven days you may labor—my example of six days of work, followed by one of cessation and rest, you may now cease to imitate." He has not said any thing like it. The law is in force therefore even until now.

Well, here is the law of God, with the reason of it. Now for the practice of men. How poorly they compare! There are indeed few who do not remember the Sabbath day, and in some manner distinguish it from the other days of the week. But the law is, that they should remember it *to keep it holy;* that they should distinguish it by hallowing it as a day of rest. This they do not. They keep it no more holy than any other day, though they do differently on that day from what they do on others. They do not the same work on that day which they do on the other days, but they do *some* work. Such as *necessity requires*, and such as *mercy dictates*, they *may* do. The law of nature teaches that, and the example of the Lord of the Sabbath sanctions and confirms the lesson. But they do other work than such as these call them to. The Sabbath is with them as *secular* a day as any other, though the manner of their worldliness on that day may be unlike what it is on the other days. What is more purely secular than visiting and traveling, yet what more

common on the day which the Lord has blessed and hallowed? These, I know, are not considered as falling under the denomination of *work*, but they do fall under it. They are as certainly included among the things forbidden to be done on the Sabbath, as are ploughing and sowing. The former are no more sacred—no less secular than are the latter.

I have been struck with the *indiscriminate* manner in which travelers use the seven days of the week. One would suppose that the law had made an exception in favor of traveling—forbidding every other species of secular employment on the day of *rest*, but allowing men to journey on it. They that would not do any other labor on the Sabbath, will nevertheless without compunction travel on that day. The farmer, who would not toil in his field; the merchant, who would not sell an article out of his store; the mechanic, who would not labor at his trade; and the mistress of the family, who scrupulously avoids certain household occupations on the Sabbath, will yet all of them, without any relentings, travel on the Sabbath, and that whether the object of their journey be business or pleasure. It makes no difference. They would not on the Sabbath do other work appropriate to the six days. That would shock them. But to commence, continue, or finish a journey on the Sabbath, offends not their consciences in the least. I am acquainted with many persons who would not for the world travel to a place on Sa-

turday, accomplish their business, the object of their journey, on Sunday, and return on Monday; but these same persons will, for a very little of the world, and without any hesitation, go to the place on Friday, do their business on Saturday, and return on Sunday. Now I would do the one just as soon as I would the other, and should consider that I desecrated the Sabbath by traveling to or from the place of business on it, just as much as by accomplishing the object of the journey on it.

I would ask the candid traveler if any thing can *secularize* the Sabbath more completely, if any thing can more effectually *nullify* it, than ordinary traveling? If a man may lawfully travel on the Sabbath, except in a case of stern necessity, such as would justify any species of work, I know not what he may not lawfully do on that day. What is more absurd than that it should be lawful and proper to *journey* on the day set apart and sanctified for *rest?* Surely journeying does not comport well with rest. But they say that traveling is not work, and therefore not included in the prohibition. I deny the fact. It is often hard and wearisome work. And what if it be not work to the passenger, is it not work to those who are employed in conveying him? If he does not labor, yet others must labor in order to enable him to travel, and is he not equally responsible for the work which he renders necessary on the Sabbath, as for that which he does with his own hands? But

what if no human being is employed to forward him on his journey, he deprives the beast of his day of rest. And is it nothing to withhold from the poor animal the privilege of the Sabbath—to compel him to work on the day on which God has directed that he should be permitted to rest?

According to this theory, that it is lawful to journey on the Sabbath, a man may so arrange it as never to be under obligation to keep a Sabbath. He has only to set apart that day of the week for traveling; he has only to keep in *motion* on the day of rest; that is all. Moreover, he who gets his living by traveling, or by the journeying of others, has, on this supposition, a manifest advantage (if such it may be called) over his neighbors. He has seven days for profit, while they have only six. The day-laborer and the poor mechanic may not use the seventh day as they do the other days of the week. *They* must make a distinction between them. But those who travel for their pleasure, or whose business calls them abroad, and those who accommodate them with conveyances, may use the seven days indiscriminately. Is this equal?

I think it must be evident to every unprejudiced mind, that to travel on the Sabbath is to use it as any other day. It is to make no distinction between it and Monday or Saturday. It disregards the peculiarity of the day altogether. Yet I suppose there is as much journeying on the Sabbath as there

is on any other day of the week. With very few exceptions, the steam-boats ply and the stages run as usual; and both, I am informed, are as full, if not more crowded on the Sabbath than on any other day; and private carriages are as numerous on the great thoroughfares, and in the vicinity of cities more so on the Sabbath. And the registers of the watering places show as many arrivals and departures on Sunday as on Monday. Yes, men make as free with the Lord's day as they do with their own days. So little regard is paid to divine authority. So little do men care for God. And, they tell me, all sorts of men travel on the Sabbath—even many professors of religion. That I would suppose. I never heard of any thing so bad that some professor of religion had not done it. It was one of the professors of religion who bartered away and betrayed our blessed Lord and Savior. And some ministers of the Gospel, I am told, do the work of traveling on the Sabbath. Now we have some ministers who have farms. I suppose it would be accounted dreadful, should they plough or reap on the Sabbath. Yet these might plough as innocently as those may travel. But these breakers of the Sabbath, and indeed almost all of this class of transgressors, are the readiest persons I ever met with at making excuses for their conduct. I propose in my next to consider some of their apologies. They will be found very curious.

21. Apologies for Traveling on the Sabbath.

Some of those who do the *work* of journeying on the Sabbath, do not condescend to make any apology for it. They care neither for the day, nor for Him who hallowed it. With these we have nothing to do. Our business is with those who, admitting the general obligation of the Sabbath, and knowing or suspecting Sunday traveling to be a sin, offer apologies which they hope may justify the act in their case, or else go far toward extenuating the criminality of it. I propose to submit to the judgment of my readers some of the *excuses* for this sin, as I cannot help calling the breach of the fourth commandment, which from time to time I have heard alleged.

I would premise that I know of no sin which men are so *sorry* for before it is done, and so ready to apologize for afterwards. I cannot tell how many persons, about to travel on the Sabbath, have answered me that they were very *sorry* to do it; and yet they have immediately gone and done it. They have repented and then sinned—just like Herod, who was sorry to put John the Baptist to death, and then immediately sent an executioner to bring his head. It does not diminish the criminality of an act that it is perpetrated with some degree of regret—and yet the presence of such a regret is considered by many as quite a tolerable excuse.

One gentleman, who was sorry to travel on the

Sabbath, added, I recollect, that it was *against his principles* to make such a use of the day. I wondered then that he should do it—that he should deliberately practice in opposition to his principles. But I was still more surprised that he should think to excuse his practice by alleging its contrariety to his principles. What are principles for but to regulate practice; and if they have not fixedness and force enough for this, of what use are they? A man's principles may as well be in favor of Sabbath breaking as his practice; and certainly it constitutes a better apology for a practice that it is in conformity to one's principles, than that it is at variance with them.

Another gave pretty much the same reason for his conduct in different words: "It is not my *habit*," said he, "to travel on the Sabbath." It was only his *act*. He did not uniformly do it. He only occasionally did it. A man must be at a loss for reasons who alleges an apology for traveling one Sabbath, that he does not travel other Sabbaths. The habit of obedience forms no excuse for the act of disobedience

An intelligent lady, who was intending to travel on the Sabbath, volunteered this exculpation of herself. She said she had traveled one Sabbath already since she left home, and she supposed it was no worse to travel on another. What then? are not two sins worse than one?

Another (and she was a lady too) said she could

read good books by the way; and you know, said she, that we can have as good thoughts in one place as in another. I assented, but could not help thinking that the persons employed in conveying her might not find their situation as favorable to devout reading and meditation. This, I suppose, did not occur to her.

Another person said that he would never *commence* a journey on the Sabbath; but when once set out, he could see no harm in proceeding. But I, for my part, could not see the mighty difference between setting out on the Sabbath, and going on on the Sabbath. My perceptions were so obtuse that I could not discern the one to be traveling, and the other to be equivalent to rest.

I heard, among other excuses, this: Sunday was the only day of the week on which the stage run to the place to which the person wished to go, and therefore he was compelled to travel on Sunday. Compelled? Why go to the place at all? Why not procure a private conveyance on another day of the week? What if it would be more expensive? Doing right pays so well, that one can afford to be at some expense to do it.

Again, I was frequently met with this apology for journeying on the Sabbath: "The stage was going on, and if I had laid by on the Sabbath, I should have lost my seat, and might have had to wait on the road, perhaps for a whole week, before I

could regain it." This apology satisfied many. They thought it quite reasonable that the person should proceed under those circumstances. But it did not satisfy me. It occurred to me, that if he had honored the Sabbath, and committed his way to the Lord, he might not have been detained on the road beyond the day of rest. But what if he had been? are we under no obligation to obey a command of God, if we foresee that obedience to it may be attended with some inconvenience? Better the detention of many days than the transgression of a precept of the decalogue.

One person told me that he meant to start very early in the morning, for he wished to occupy as little of the Sabbath in traveling as possible. Another proposed to lie by all the middle of the day, and proceed in the evening, and he was sure there could be no harm in that. Ah, thought I, and has not Sunday a morning and an evening appropriate to itself as well as any other day of the week? Is the morning of Sunday all one with Saturday, and the evening no more sacred than Monday? Did God hallow only the middle of the day? And is the day of rest shorter by several hours than any other day? I never could see how one part of the Sabbath should be entitled to more religious respect than another part. It seems to me a man may as properly travel on the noon of the Sabbath, as in the morning or evening.

One person was very particular to tell me what he meant to do after he had traveled a part of the Lord's day. He expected, by about 10 or 11 o'clock, to come across a church, and he intended to go in and worship. That he supposed would set all right again.

Another, a grave looking personage, was traveling on the Sabbath to reach an ecclesiastical meeting in season. Another, in order to fulfill an appointment he had made to preach. These were ministers. They pleaded the necessity of the case; but I could see no necessity in it. I thought the necessity of keeping God's commandments a much clearer and stronger case of necessity. The business of the meeting could go on without that clergyman, or it might have been deferred a day in waiting for him, or he might have left home a day earlier. The appointment to preach should not have been made; or if made, should have been broken.

There was one apologist who had not heard from home for a good while, and he was anxious to learn about his family. Something in their circumstances might require his presence. I could not sustain even that apology, for I thought the Lord could take care of his family without him as well as with him, and I did not, believe they would be likely to suffer by his resting on the Sabbath out of respect to God's commandment, and spending the day in imploring the divine blessing on them.

Another apologist chanced to reach on Saturday

night an indifferent public house. He pleaded, therefore, that it was necessary for him to proceed on the next day until he should arrive at better accommodations. But I could not help thinking that his being comfortably accommodated was not, on the whole, so important as obedience to the decalogue

One person thought he asked an unanswerable question, when he begged to know why it was not as well to be on the road, as to be lying by at a country tavern. It occurred to me, that if his horses had possessed the faculty of Balaam's beast, they could have readily told him the difference, and why the latter part of the alternative was preferable.

There was still another person who was sure his excuse would be sustained. He was one of a party, who were determined to proceed on the Sabbath in spite of his reluctance, and he had no choice but to go on with them. Ah, had he no choice? would they have forced him to go on? could he not have separated from such a party? or might he not, if he had been determined, have prevailed on them to rest on the Lord's day? Suppose he had said, mildly yet firmly: "My conscience forbids me to journey on the Sabbath. You can go, but you must leave me. I am sorry to interfere with your wishes, but I cannot offend God." Is it not ten to one such a remonstrance would have been successful? I cannot help suspecting that the person was willing to be *compelled* in this case.

But many said that this strict keeping of the Sabbath was an old *puritanical* notion, and this seemed o ease their consciences somewhat. I remarked that I thought it older than puritanism. A *Sinaitical* notion I judged it to be, rather than puritanical.

Many Sunday travelers I met with, begged me not tell their pious relatives that they had traveled on the Sabbath. They thought, if these knew it, they would not think so well of them, and they would be likely to hear of it again. No one asked me not to tell God. They did not seem to care how it affected them in his estimation. It never occurred to them that they might hear from the Lord of the Sabbath on the subject.

I do not know any purpose which such apologies for Sabbath-breaking serve, since they satisfy neither God nor his people, but one, and that is not a very valuable one. They serve only, as far as I can see, to delude those who offer them.

I love to be fair. I have been objecting lately against the Catholics, that they reduce the number of the commandments to *nine*. I here record my acknowledgment that some of us Protestants have really but nine. The Catholics omit the *second;* some of our Protestants the *fourth.*

23. I Have Done Giving.

A gentleman of high respectability, and a member of the church, made this remark the other day, when informed that an application was about to be made to him in behalf of some charitable object. "I have done giving," said he. When I heard of his remark it awakened in my mind a train of reflection, which I have thought it might not be amiss to communicate.

"Done giving!" Has he indeed? Why? Has he given all? Has he nothing left to give? Has this disciple done what his Master did? Was he rich, and has he become poor for the sake of others, that they, through his poverty, might be rich? O no! he is rich still. He has the greatest abundance—more than enough to support him in elegance, and to enable him to leave an ample inheritance to his children. What if he has a great deal? He has not only not impoverished himself, but is probably richer now, through the favor of Providence, than he would have been had he never given any thing. Now if, by honoring the Lord with his substance, his barns, instead of being emptied, have been filled with plenty, he had better continue this mode of honoring him. He should rather increase than arrest his liberality.

"Done giving!" Why? Is there no more need of giving? Is every want abundantly supplied? Is

the whole population of our country furnished with the means of grace? Is the world evangelized? Have missionaries visited every shore? Is the Bible translated into every language and distributed in every land, a copy in every family, and every member of every family taught to read it? Are the accommodations for widows and orphans as ample as they should be? Is there a house of refuge for every class of the human family that needs one? Or have the poor ceased from the land? O no! There are no such good reasons as these for ceasing to give. Why then has he done giving? Is it because others do not give as they ought? But what is that to him? Will he make the practice of others his rule of conduct, rather than the precept of Jesus Christ? If others do not give, so much the more should he. Will he add another name to the list of niggards?

Does he feel worse for having given away so much? Has it made him unhappy? Is his experience different from that of the Lord Jesus, who said, "It is more *blessed* to give than to receive?"

Has he, who thinks he will give no more, been led to that conclusion by having found that what has been given hitherto has done no good? And is it so, that no good has been done by all the Bibles published, and all the Tracts distributed, and all the missionaries sent abroad into our own land and into the world; and all the schools established, and all the children taught to read, and all the civilization intro-

duced, and all the asylums opened, and all the poverty relieved? Has no good been done? Good, great good has been done by what has been given; but still more will be done by what shall be given hereafter. Bibles can now be printed at a cheaper rate than heretofore, and the conductors of our charitable operations have learned, by experience, that economy which can be learned in no other way. And yet at this time, when a dollar goes so far in doing good, here is a man who says, "I have done giving!" If I had his ear for a moment, I would ask him if he has done *receiving*—if God has done giving to him. I would ask him, moreover, if he has done *spending*, or done *hoarding*, or done *wasting*. Now, if he has not, he surely should not stop giving. When he ceases to waste, to hoard, and to spend, except for the merest necessaries, then he may stop giving, but never till then.

"Done giving!" that is, done lending to the Lord! Done sowing and watering! Done offering the sacrifices with which God is well pleased! Done making the widow's heart leap for joy, and bringing on himself the blessing of them that were ready to perish! Well, I am sorry—sorry for the sake of the poor, and the sick, and the orphan, and the ignorant, and the heathen. But no less sorry am I for the man's own sake. Poor man! poor with all his affluence, for there is really no one more poor than he, who, with the ability to give, has not the inclina-

tion. He has it in his power to give, but not in his heart. He is enriched with abundance, but not with liberality.

"Done giving!" well then, if he will not *give* his money, he must *keep* it. And yet how short the time he can keep it! Had he not better freely give away some of it, than to wait for it all to be torn from him? The thought that he has *given*, will be at least as agreeable a meditation in his dying moments, as the reflection that he *spent*, or that he *laid up*.

I hope that gentleman who said "I have done giving," will recall his resolution, and taking revenge on himself for having made it, give more liberally than ever.

---

23. "I Will Give Liberally."

It is a good resolution, founded on good reasons, some of which I will state, in the hope that others may be induced to come to a similar determination.

I will give liberally, for the following reasons, viz.

1. Because the objects for which I am called upon to give are great and noble. It is the cause of letters and religion, of man and God, for which my donations are wanted. The interests of time and eternity both are involved in it. Now, it is a shame

to give calculatingly and sparingly to such a cause, and for such objects. If one gives at all, he should give liberally. Nothing can justify a person's putting in only two mites, but its being all his living.

2. Liberal donations are needed. The cause not only *deserves* them, but *requires* them. It takes a great deal to keep the present operations a going; and we must every year extend the works. Do you not know that we have the world to go over, and the millennium is just at hand? Look, the morning of that day is getting bright. We can almost see the sun peering above the horizon.

3. My means either enable me now to give liberally, or, by economy and self-denial, may be so increased as to enable me to give liberally. I will give liberally so long as I do not resort to economy and self-denial; and if I do resort to them, that will enable me to give liberally.

4. I will give liberally, because I have *received* liberally. God has given liberally. He has not only filled my cup, but made it run over. He has given me "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over." I will imitate him in my gifts to others, and especially in my donations to his cause.

5. I am liberal in my *expenditures*, and therefore I will be in my *donations*. Why should I *spend* much and *give* little? It is not because spending is more blessed. No, it is giving that is said to be

more blessed. The conduct of a man, whose expenditures are large and his donations small, is literally *monstrous*. I will not act so out of all proportion. If I must retrench, I will retrench from my expenditures, and not from my benefactions.

6. The time for giving is short, and therefore I will give liberally while I have the opportunity of giving at all. Soon I shall be compelled to have done giving.

7. A blessing is promised to liberal giving, and I want it. The liberal soul shall be made fat. Therefore I will be liberal. "And he that watereth, shall be watered also himself." Then I will water. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth." Therefore I will scatter; and not sparingly, but bountifully; for "he which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully."

8. I will give liberally, because it is not a clear gift, it is a *loan*. "He that has pity upon the poor *lendeth* unto the Lord;" lendeth to the best of paymasters, on the best security, and at the highest rate of interest; for he renders *double*, aye, a *hundred fold in this life*, to say nothing of the life to come. I will lend him liberally.

9. I will give liberally, because *the times are hard* where the Gospel is not.

10. I will give liberally, because there are many who would, but cannot; and many that can, but will

not. It is so much the more necessary, therefore, that they should who are both able and inclined. I used to say, "I will not give liberally, because others do not. There is a richer man than I am, who does not give so much as I do." But now, from the same premises, I draw the opposite conclusion. Because others do not give liberally, I will.

11. I have sometimes tried giving liberally, and I do not believe I have ever lost any thing by it. I have seen others try it, and they did not seem to lose any thing by it; and, on the whole, I think a man is in no great danger of losing, who puts liberally into the treasury of the Lord and possessor of all things, and the giver of every good and perfect gift.

12. And finally, when I ask myself if I shall ever be sorry for giving liberally, I hear from within a prompt and most decided negative, "No, never."

Wherefore I conclude that I will give liberally. It is a good resolution, I am certain; and now I will take care that I do not spoil it all by putting an illiberal construction on liberally. I will understand it as meaning *freely, cheerfully, largely*, whether the lexicographers say so or not; or, in other words, as meaning *what I ought to give, and a little more.* I will tell you how I will do. An object being presented to me, when I have ascertained what *justice* requires me to give, I will add something, lest, through insidious selfishness, I may have underrated my ability; and that, if I err, I may be sure to err on the

right side. Then I will add a little to my donation out of *generosity*. And when I have counted out what justice requires, and what generosity of her free will offers, then I will think of Him, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich; and I say not that I will add a little more, but, how can I keep back any thing?

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
"That were a present far too small:
"Love so amazing, so divine,
"Demands my soul, my life, my all."

---

24. The Calls are so Many.

This is one of the most common complaints of those who are called upon to contribute to charitable objects: "The calls are so many," they say. Now, let us inquire into this matter.

1. Are there really so many? Reckon them up. Perhaps they are not, after all, so many as you imagine. Any thing which annoys us, at intervals, is apt to be considered as coming oftener than it really does. When a man has rent to pay, how frequently quarter day seems to come round! But it is not so

with him who is the receiver. The calls are not, in fact, so many as you imagine. I asked a wealthy lady once, who thought she gave a great deal away in charity, to keep an accurate account for one year of all she gave away, particularly to the religious charities; (which are those that are most complained of;) and I predicted that she would find, at the close of the year, that her donations had been less than she imagined. She did so, and at the end of the year came to me and said she was perfectly ashamed to find that she had spent so much and given so little. She found that the calls were *not* "so very many."

2. If the calls are so many, yet do not make that a reason for refusing them all. I fear that some do. But surely that the calls are so many, is no reason that you should not comply with some of them. It is only a reason why you should not comply with *all*. Meet one-half of them generously, if you cannot meet them all. You acknowledge that there ought to be some calls, when you complain that they are so many.

3. If the calls are many, are they more than the *wants?* Ought they not to be as many? Would you have the calls fewer than the wants? That would never do;—then some wants would never be supplied. Besides, you should consider who makes or permits the wants—and therefore the calls—to be so many, lest your complaint cast a reflection on God. If the calls are so many—*too* many, and we

must dispense with some, which shall they be? Widows and orphans, and the poor generally, you dare not, as you fear God, except from your charities. Will you refuse the call of the Bible agent, or the Tract agent? Will you withhold from Foreign Missions, or from Home Missions, or from both? Or will you say, "We will contribute to send out and support missionaries both at home and abroad, but we will not aid in their *education?* Let them get that as they can. Let them make their way through the academy, the college, and the theological seminary as they can. And let Sunday schools establish and support themselves; and temperance agents see, since they are so much in favor of abstinence, if they cannot get along without the staff of life." For my part, I do not know what calls to except, and therefore I judge the safer way to be to receive none.

4. If the calls are many, the expenditures are more; and we not only spend, but waste, in more ways than we give.

5. If the calls you receive are so many, suppose, in order to avoid them, that you *make* some. Turn agent for some society, and you shall see how much more pleasant it is to make calls than to receive them. We will excuse you from contributing, if you will solicit. But that you would not like at all. "You cannot bear begging. It is the most unpleasant thing in the world to apply to people for money." Very

well; if you decline this branch of the alternative, then do not complain of the other. If you will not turn out and make the calls, you must sit still and receive them. It is the easier part; and you ought to be good natured when you receive one of these calls—aye, and even grateful to the man who comes to you, that he affords you another opportunity of offering one of the sacrifices with which God is well pleased, without going out of your way to do it. Others must go about to do good, but you can *sit still* and do good.

6. If the calls are so many, this importunity will not last long. Not more than seventy or eighty years does it ever continue. If it is an annoyance, you can bear it a few years. In eternity you will never receive these or any other calls. I knew several rich men whose last calls were made on them in 1833.

Do these calls pester you? They bless others. Yonder is a poor woman reading the Bible which your money paid for. And there is another weeping over a Tract which she owes to your donation. And there is a third blessing the good people that support domestic missions: and there is a heathen mother, who perhaps would have immolated her child, if your contribution had not helped to send her the Gospel. Do you hear that young man? How well he preaches! You assisted to educate him. Dear friend, do not complain, but welcome

every call; treat all the agents with civility, and do as much as you any way can for the various benevolent objects; for "the time is short," and all the regret which your liberality will occasion you I will consent to suffer.

---

25. "I Can't Afford It."

This is another of the common excuses for not giving. A person, being applied to in behalf of this or that good object, says, "I approve the object. It ought to be encouraged, and I am sorry I cannot aid it. But so it is. The calls on me are so many, and my means are so limited, I cannot afford it." Now it may be he is mistaken. Perhaps he can afford it. The heart is very deceitful. But admitting that he cannot afford it, as is often the case, yet does this excuse him? Is the want of ability a sufficient apology? By no means. There is another thing to be considered—the *cause* of his inability. *Why* can he not afford it? We must go back one step, and inquire how it comes to pass that he is so destitute of means as to be unable to give to this and that good object. What if he *has* not the ability, provided he *might* have it? Now as it regards the *cause* of the inability.

1. Perhaps he does not *earn* as much as he might. In that case, his not being able to afford it is no excuse. All he has to do is to earn a little more, and then he can afford it. Let only his idle hours be fewer—let him but work a little longer, or a little harder, and there will be no difficulty. And why should not a man earn to *give*, as well as earn to eat, drink, and put on? Are these last more blessed than giving? Why should you not put forth a little extra effort, if it be necessary to enable you to promote the cause of humanity and religion? We see that this man is the author of his inability, and therefore it is no excuse. He *could* afford it if he would but take certain simple and obvious measures to do so.

2. Perhaps the case may be that he does not *save* as much as he might. He is not *idle*, but he is prodigal. He earns enough, but he does not economically use it. Now a penny saved is equal to a penny earned; and it is all one to the treasury of charity whether that which it receives comes of economy or of industry. The person of whom I now speak, *earns* it, but he does not *save* it. Hence his inability. His income is more than sufficient for the comfortable subsistence of himself and those dependent on him, yet he is so inconsiderate in his expenditures, *wastes* so much, that he has nothing left to give. Now, I would ask if it is not worth while to practice economy for the sake of being able to exercise

liberality; to *save* for the sake of having something to give to the cause of the Lord? Is it not worth all the care which economy requires?

3. But perhaps I have not suggested the true cause of the inability. If, however, the apologist will allow me the liberty of a little survey and criticism, I think I can ascertain why he cannot afford it. And first I will scan his person. O, I see why you cannot afford it! You *wear* your money. You have got so much of your earnings or income on your person, that it is no wonder that you cannot afford to give. Why, there is one article worn over the shoulders, that cost one hundred dollars, or more. Now I do not say, *take it off;* but I do say, that while it is *on*, you have no right to plead, "I cannot afford it," for you wear a proof that you can afford it. Next I will enter the house. The size and situation of it is perhaps unnecessarily expensive; and then the furniture! Here the wonder ceases—the mystery is explained. I see plainly enough why you cannot afford it.

Now, again I say, I am not one of those who would have you sell off your furniture and move out of the house you occupy, for God has given us "richly all things to enjoy;" but while you live in the manner you do, pray do not plead that you cannot afford it when one asks you to give to the cause of some charity. Now the table is set. The service is very fine. Distant China has contributed of its

porcelain, and *Potosi* of the product of its mines to enrich it. What a display of silver! I see why you cannot afford it. You have melted the dollars by which you could have afforded it, into plate. Now, either send that back to the mint again, or else do not send away the agent for that Christian institution emptyhanded. The dinner is spread. Many and rich are the dishes. I do not complain. Only when you have such a table before you, dare not to say that you cannot afford the money which shall purchase and send a little of the bread of life to the destitute and perishing. Then follows the —*wines*, I should say. Well, what is the harm? Even the temperance pledge excepts wine. No harm. Only do not say again "I cannot afford it," to him who comes to plead before you the cause of the orphan, the ignorant, the unevangelized. Or, if you excuse yourself, tell the whole truth—say; "For my *wine*, I cannot afford it." There drives up a carriage. It is in fine style; one servant on the box, and one behind—a noble span. Yet the gentleman and lady who ride in that carriage, when one comes and tells them of the poor heathen who are groping their way in the dark to eternity, haughtily, perhaps, reply that they have nothing to give. O no, they cannot *give*, for they must ride in state. But here is another who dresses and lives very plainly; yet *he* cannot afford it. Why, what is the matter? O, his money is in the stocks, and he cannot touch the principal;

and there are his children for whom he must make a liberal provision.

Friend, hear me: you *can* afford it, if you will. If you have not the ability, you can acquire it. You can *earn* more; or you can *save* more. You can *spend* less. You can afford it out of your furniture, your dress, your table, your equipage—or, perhaps, *over and above* it all. You *can* afford it, and you *ought* to afford it. You *must* afford it. Come, now, and resolve that you *will*. Say no more, "I cannot afford it," but "I will afford it." You can afford to indulge yourself when you wish—to take your pleasure—to gratify your children. And can you not afford to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to send the balm of life abroad into a diseased and dying world? It is very strange! Are you a Christian? As for me, "I cannot afford *not to give*"—there is so much gain in giving—so much loss in not giving, that if I cannot afford any thing else, I must afford this. Some say they are too poor to give, but I am too poor *not* to give; and, moreover, I can no longer afford to give so little as heretofore I have given. Indeed, I must *sow* more bountifully, for I want to *reap* also bountifully. This parsimony in the use of *seed money* is poor policy.

26. An Example of Liberality.

I am going to give an example of liberality. But where do you think I am going to take it from, and what persons hold up as an example of liberality? Not Christians, though there were in the apostolic age of Christianity notable examples of liberality, many disciples literally doing as did their Master, impoverishing themselves for his cause; and though since that time there have been others, and are now not a few of a kindred spirit. The example I propose to give is taken from the history of the Jews. Some will wonder that I go to the Jews for an example of liberality. But I wish, for my part, that Christians were only as generous as the Jews once were, whatever they may be now.

The case to which I refer is related in Exodus, chapter 35. The tabernacle was to be erected and furnished; and for this purpose various and very precious materials were requisite. He who gave his people bread and water by miracle, could have miraculously furnished all that was necessary for the tabernacle, just as he can now convert the heathen without the help of men and means. But he did not choose to do it, as now he does not choose to save the world without employing human instrumentality. God does not every thing which he is able to do. Some people seem to think that they are un-

der no obligation to attempt any thing which God can do without them.

The plan adopted for obtaining the materials was this. Moses, in a full assembly of the people, gave the following notice: "This is the thing which the Lord commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord; whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord; gold, and silver, and brass," &c. This was all the agency that was employed for the collection of all those costly materials. How in contrast stands this to our necessarily numerous, expensive, and laborious agencies! Here was a simple notice given; a bare statement made that such and such things were wanted. Nor were the people called on to give on the spot, or to pledge their donations. They were not taken unawares, and hurried into an exercise of liberality. Time was given them for consideration. After the notice the congregation was dismissed. Nor was it made the absolute *duty* of the people to give. A command was indeed issued on the subject, but individuals were left free to give or not, as they pleased. "Whosoever is of a *willing* heart, let him bring it." And it appears from Exodus, 25 : 2, where the subject is first introduced, that Moses was not to receive any offering that was not given willingly and cheerfully. "Of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering."

By the way, may not this be a rule which should

be regarded now—not to receive an offering into the Lord's treasury, if there be any evidence of its being reluctantly given? If nothing was to be received for the work of the tabernacle, but what was given with the heart, why should heartless donations be accepted for the edification and extension of the church? It has occurred to me, that perhaps one reason why the means which our benevolent societies employ effect no more—why our Bibles and Tracts, and the labors of our Missionaries, are not more extensively blessed, is, that these operations are not sustained and carried on by purely free-will offerings. A great deal that goes to sustain them is grudgingly given. I know it may be said that if we reject all but free-will offerings, our means will not suffice. If that should be the case, yet I doubt not less money, cheerfully contributed, would accomplish more than a larger amount drawn out of the pockets of an unwilling and complaining people. But I do not believe that the sum total of receipts would be less. Was there any deficiency in the offerings contributed for the tabernacle? So far from it, there was a superabundance. The artisans came and told Moses, saying, "The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work." Accordingly, Moses forbade any more offerings being brought. "So the people were restrained from bringing, for the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and *too much*." The liberality went far

beyond the necessity. Christians give now no such examples of liberality for the church. *Now* much less than enough is received; and that, though the notice is oft repeated—and though more than a mere notice is given—though warm and earnest appeals are made, and the greatest urgency used; and though new arguments are employed, such as could not have been used with these Jews. What a foundation for argument and appeal is laid in the love and death of Christ! What convincing force—what persuasive efficacy ought there not to be to the mind and heart of every follower of Jesus, in the logic of that passage which Paul used so successfully with the Corinthians! "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich." The Jews did not know that. Yet how liberally they gave!—*more than enough!* But now, with all our knowledge, *less* than enough is received; and that, though after the public application and appeal are made, the people are *waited on*, and the application and appeal are renewed in private. Moses sent no one round, from tent to tent, to gather the contributions of the people. No. These Jews brought them. But, ah, how little do Christians now *bring* to the treasury of the Lord! How small a proportion of the money used for the work of the Lord is *brought!* No. It has to be sent after The benevolence of the church now *complies*. It

does not *offer*. It does, to be sure, *stand still* and do some good; but it does not *go about* doing good. All the labor and trouble connected with giving is declined. It is considered now-a-days to be a very good excuse for not giving to a well-known object of benevolence, if the person can say that he has not been called on to give. Not called on! Did your Master wait to be called on? Did his charity defer its action until application was made to it? Formerly it was held that the disciple should be as his master. In other days Christ was regarded as the *model*, and that Christianity was not thought any thing of which did not include an imitation of Christ.

Would it not be considered as a very unwise proceeding on the part of an agent now, should he, after stating an object, immediately dismiss the people, and leave it entirely optional with them to give or not? Would he be likely to hear from all of them again? But Moses did so. He dismissed them; "and all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses." But the very next verse says, "they came and brought the Lord's offering." There was nothing lost to the cause by this arrangement. "They came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted." They all did it cheerfully.

But some may say, "It is no wonder they gave; what use had they in the wilderness for their money and substance?" But observe what articles they con-

tributed. *Gold, and silver, and precious stones*, which men value, whether they have any particular use for them or not. Nor these only, but their *personal ornaments*, "bracelets, and ear-rings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold." You see they gave things which are valued under all circumstances. Nor could it be said that they gave generously because they were in prosperous business. Some persons say they are always willing to give freely when they are making money. Now, the Israelites were not making money, nor were they passing through a gold country, yet they gave liberally—far beyond the liberality of prosperous Christians generally. Nor was it a single donation they made. We read in the 36th chapter, "and they brought yet unto him free offerings *every morning*." They kept it up from day to day; and how long they would have gone on, if not restrained from giving more, no one can tell. I wonder when we shall have to restrain Christians from giving. What a different state of things we find now! We talk about "stubborn Jews, that unbelieving race;" but there was one generation of them, at least, that were not near as *obstinate* in holding on to their money and substance as the present race of Christians.

27. Another Example of Liberality.

The first example was taken from the history of the Jews. The one I am now to give is taken from the records of Christianity. And yet it is not in any history of the modern church that I find it. They are not the Christians of the present day that I am going to hold up as a model of bountifulness. The reader will find the account in the eighth and ninth chapters of the second Epistle to the Corinthians. It relates to the Christians of Macedonia. Paul, wishing to excite the Corinthians to the exercise of liberality, tells them what their brethren of Macedonia had done—how liberally they had given. The account is very remarkable in several respects.

1. These Macedonian Christians gave, though they were *very poor*—in "deep poverty," ch. 8, v. 2. They had the best of all excuses for not giving. *They* might, with the greatest propriety, have pleaded poverty. I do not see, for my part, how they gave at all. But somehow or other they made out to give, and to give liberally. Their poverty does not seem to have stood in their way in the least. It is even said that "their deep poverty *abounded* unto the riches of their liberality." Now, if their deep poverty so abounded, it occurs to me to ask, what would not their *great riches* have done, had they been as wealthy as some *American* Christians? The truth is, as the proverb says, "when there is a will, there

is always a way." Having it in their heart to give, they contrived by dint of some ingenuity, and not a little self-denial, to get it into their power to give. Such liberal souls had they, that it made their very poverty abound unto the riches of their liberality.

2. They gave not only to the full extent of their ability, but even beyond it. "For to their power, (I bear record,) yea, and beyond their power," they gave. So testifies the apostle. The Christians of our day do not give *more* than they are able. I wish it could be said that they give according to their ability. *Now*, the idea of giving as much as one any way can, is almost laughed at. But it was no joke in former times. But how did they contrive to give *beyond* their power, some one will ask. This looks a little contradictory. Well, I suppose it means that they gave beyond what, on the usual principles of computation, would have been judged to be their ability; and that on the score of justice, and even of generosity, they might have been let off for less.

"What improvident persons!" some will say. "How they must have neglected their families! Are we not told to provide for our own, and that he who does not, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel?" Yes, we are told so. But for all that it does not appear that these Macedonians were censured as worse than infidels. They were even commended as Christians, whose example was worthy of all imitation.

3. They gave *willingly*, verse 3. They did not give beyond their disposition, though they did beyond their ability. They had it in their hearts to give even more. It was done, "not grudgingly or of necessity," No one said, as is sometimes said now, "well, I suppose I *must* give you something." Nor was their willingness the effect of any appeals made to them. They were "willing *of themselves*," the apostle testifies. It was entirely spontaneous. The apostles had not to entreat them to give; but they had earnestly to entreat the apostles to receive their gift. "Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift." It is not so now. Now, the *begging* is too much on the other side.

4. They gave altogether beyond the apostles' expectations. "Not as we hoped," says Paul. Our agents are not often so agreeably disappointed. Their fears are more apt to be realized, than their hopes exceeded.

5. But I see how it was they came to give so liberally. It was owing to "the grace of God bestowed" on them, as it is said in verse 1. That always makes people liberal. Grace is a generous principle. There is nothing opens the heart like it. Under the influence of this grace they "first gave their own selves to the Lord." Now when a man has given away *himself*, it is easy to give what only appertains to him. The great matter is to give the *person*. The *property* follows as a matter of course. Indeed it is

included in the first gift. I suppose the reason that some give no more property to the Lord's cause, is that they have not given themselves to him. They have not begun right.

6. I suppose also that these Macedonians were influenced to the exercise of liberality by the consideration which Paul uses with the Corinthians in verse 9. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich," &c. They thought that the disciples ought to do like their Master. I conclude, moreover, that they held the doctrine, that giving is *sowing*, and that men reap in proportion to what they sow; and since they wished to reap bountifully, they sowed bountifully. They knew too that God was able to make all grace abound toward them; that they, always having all sufficiency in all things, might abound to every good work, ch. 9, verse 8. They were not at all concerned about the consequences of their liberality.

It should not be forgotten that they gave for the benefit of people a great way off—the poor saints at Jerusalem. They might have said that they had objects enough at home, and where was the necessity of going abroad for them. But it seems *distance* had not that weight with them that it has with some now. The wants of the poor saints at Jerusalem touched their hearts, and they contributed for their relief, though they were poor, very poor themselves. I don't know but I might have made it with propriety

a distinct head, that they seem to have been even poorer than those for whom they gave; for theirs was *deep* poverty. When *we* give to evangelize poor souls in heathen lands, we don't give to those who are as well off as we are. We have no such objects at home as they are. Finally, what a noble example of liberality is here! How worthy of imitation by *American* Christians! We need much that the spirit of these men of Macedonia should come over and help us.

---

28. More about Liberality.

In my opinion there is nothing which lays the church more open to infidel attack and contempt, than its parsimony to the cause of Christ. Professors of religion, in general, give nothing in comparison to what they ought to give. Some *literally* give nothing, or somewhere in that immediate neighborhood. I shall not inquire whether such persons are really Christian men. One might almost question whether they are *human.*

I have used the word *give;* I must correct my language. *Deliver up*, I ought to say, when speaking of Christians who have so often acknowledged

themselves as not their own, but *themselves* and *their's* to be the Lord's. Not a cent, or not much more, will some of these deliver up of all that their Lord has given them in trust. What stewards we Christians are! We act as if we were undisputed owners and sovereign proprietors of all; when we know, and if pressed, acknowledge, it is no such thing. The infidels know that we profess to be but stewards, and that, in our devotional hours, we write on every thing we have, "This is the Lord's;" and they naturally expect to see some correspondence between our profession and practice; and when they perceive that in this instance it is but bare profession, and that we do not mean any thing by it, they are very apt to conclude that this is true of our religion generally. Moreover, these shrewd characters see common humanity constraining men of the world to greater liberality than the love of Christ constrains his reputed disciples to exercise; and that, though they hear Christians continually saying that there is no principle which has such power to carry men out to deeds and sacrifices of benevolence as the love of Christ. What must they conclude from this? Either that there is no such principle, or that Christians do not feel the force of it.

Again: Infidels hear us speak of giving, as *lending* to the Lord. Now, they don't believe any such thing; but since we do, they are astonished that we do not lend more liberally to such a paymaster, and

on such security. *They* are in the habit of lending liberally, and they wonder Christians do not. They hear us also repeating and admiring that sentiment, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Must they not think us insincere in our commendations of this sentiment, or else that we have very faint aspirations after the more blessed part, when they look on and see with how much more complacency and good humor we receive a great deal, than give a little.

But about the parsimony of Christians. I do not hesitate to say, having well considered the import of my words, that men are not so *mean* (I must use the word) to any cause as Christians, in general, are to Christ's cause. They give more sparingly to it than to any other. Just think of the American Bible Society receiving scarcely one hundred thousand dollars a-year from these United States, to give the Bible to the country and to the world. There is one fact for you. More is often given to carry a political election in a single limited district; and some professors of religion will give more to promote such an object than to help on the conversion of the world. I should not wonder if this article were read by some who have done so this very year.

Many persons never give until they have done every thing else; and when any pressure occurs, it is the first thing they stop doing. They go on spending, not only for necessaries and comforts, but even for luxuries, never minding the pressure. They only

stop giving; commencing retrenchment with their donations, and generally ending it with them. They are liberal still for every thing but charity. You could never suppose, to look at their dress, equipage, furniture, table, &c. that the times were any way hard. No, they forget that, till they are called on to give; then they feel the pressure of the times.

The manner in which some persons give is worthy of no very commendatory notice. They say, when applied to, "Well, I suppose I must give you something." Mark the word *must*, where *will* ought to be; and *give*, where *contribute*, or strictly speaking, *yield up*, should have been; and you—give *you*. It is no such thing. The man is no beggar. He is not asking any thing for himself. He has himself given to the same object; and more than money—his time and thought, his cares and efforts. Nay, perhaps has given his own person to the service which he asks others to aid by their pecuniary contributions. Christians, so called, talk of giving to support missionaries, as if they laid the missionaries under some obligation to them. Preposterous! How it sounds to hear a British Christian indulge such a remark in reference to the richly-gifted, and profoundly learned *Martyn*, who, when he might have shone at home, went into the sickly East to hold up the light of life in those dark places! To call men who give themselves to the work of the Lord, and to labor and die for their fellow-men, the protegees, ben-

eficiaries, and obligated dependants of us who live and luxuriate at home, is really too bad; men, who when the alternative is to go or send, consent to the weightier branch of the alternative, and go; that they should be looked upon as inferior to us, who choose the lighter part of the alternative, and only send! I say it is too bad. "I must give you something!" Really!

I do not wonder, for my part, that God does not give "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven," to the present generation of saints. Their souls are not sufficiently expanded to receive it. It will require a race of Christians of *great hearts* to take possession of the world in the name of Jesus—Christians who shall be constrained by his love, and who shall feel the full force of the consideration presented in 2 Cor. 8 : 9. Many Christians now think they feel it; but is it feeling the force of that consideration for a man, who has an income of some thousands a-year, to give a few surplus dollars annually to support missions, or to circulate the Bible? I do not say, that because Christ impoverished himself, therefore all his followers ought literally to do the same; but I say they ought to come nearer to it than they do. If, being rich, they should not become poor, as he did, yet surely they ought to be more free with their riches. If the master gave his whole *principal*, certainly the disciples might give their *interest*. That

would not be too closely imitating him. If he *emptied* himself, they at least might forego farther accumulation. They need not become poor; but why should they be so solicitous to become more rich? That is being as unlike the model as possible.

---

29. A Tract Effort.

We had a meeting last night in one of our churches to raise the sum of one thousand dollars in aid of the American Tract Society's foreign operations. The notice was general in the churches; and to many individuals repeated in the shape of a printed request sent to them on the day of the meeting. The evening came, and it was one of the finest we ever have; not a cloud, and the moon shining forth in her fullest splendor—emulating, to her utmost, the light of the orb of day. We had not, however, a very large meeting.

Few, even of our church members, can be persuaded to adopt that sentiment of the Savior, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Many are unable to conceal the sceptical smile, when it is gravely advanced and urged as an argument for liberality. More blessed to give! There is nothing in

them that responds to that sentiment. Yet Jesus said it seriously. He meant what he said; and some of his dear followers know in their hearts that it is so. They experience the superior blessedness of giving. Far more delightful to them is the feeling when they communicate, than the feeling when they receive; and giving leaves an impression of pleasure on the soul which no other act does or can. To be capable of communicating! What a privilege! they exclaim. It is to be like God, who all things gives, but nought receives, save the gratitude and praise of his innumerable pensioners and dependants. These persons give now as they pray, almost forgetting it is a duty, so occupied are their souls with a feeling that it is a privilege.

But we met to promote a *foreign* object; and that made against us with some. The *distance* of the heathen from us was even pleaded by one as an argument against contributing. They are *so far off*. So far off—my thoughts dwelt on these words—and I reflected thus: "They are not so far off from us, as angels are from men. Yet angels come over the distance to minister to men. No part of earth is so far from any other part, as earth from heaven; yet, did not the benevolence of the Son of God bring him across that long interval of space? How have we his spirit, if our benevolence cannot carry us the length and breadth of this little continuous earth? What if the object *be* foreign? Earth was more fo-

reign to heaven. The man that argues against missions as foreign, is not aware perhaps that his argument assails the mission of the Son of God, and would prove the incarnation to have been an unwise measure. But is it foreign? What! one spot of earth foreign to another, and man an alien to man! Christianity teaches a different lesson—that earth is but one great habitation, and men but one extended brotherhood. O shall we, who have been visited by a benefactor from the skies, think any part of earth too distant for our charity to explore! Jesus thought it not so when he said, "Go ye into all the world." If the argument of distance had prevailed with others, we had never heard of Jesus. Was not Britain *far off?* Yet Christian missionaries visited it. I wonder that this circumstance should be forgotten. Was that a *Quixotic* enterprise which resulted in the conversion of our ancestors? If not, how is that Quixotic which undertakes the conversion of a nation now in heathenism? Too distant! There was something formidable in distance once. But what is distance now? With the star, and the compass, and the sail, and the steam, and man's skill to construct, and courage to dare, and fortitude to endure, what, I ask, is distance? Diminished almost to being annihilated. Whither has not man gone for his own objects? Whither shall he not go for Christ's? Shall curiosity, the love of science, the passion for adventure, the lust of gain, carry men farther than the love of Christ

shall constrain them to go? O never. There is no force in the objection.

It was, notwithstanding all, a good meeting. Those who were present gave liberally, and with the help of the ladies we shall more than make up the sum we proposed. I know some think these women ought not to labor with us in the gospel. But why not *these*, as well as "those women" which labored with Paul in the gospel, of whom he makes such respectful mention in his epistle to the Philippians? Was it proper then to use their aid, and not now? May they not do what they can for Christ as well as their sister whom Christ commended for having done what she could? Were they not women whom Christ sent on the first errand he wanted done after his resurrection? "Go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me." May not such as went on that errand, go on that greater errand: "Go ye and teach all nations?" May they not at least promote the going of others? What, are women the followers of Jesus Christ, and may they not, as their Master did, *go about* doing good?

30. Why the World Should Have the Bible.

There are a great many reasons why the world should have the Bible. The reasons are so numerous, substantial and urgent, that I wonder any should have doubts about it. And I wonder that we who have the Bible, and think so much of it, and have such means of multiplying and circulating copies of it, do not resolve at once to attempt, within a reasonable period, to give it to the world, since the world can only have it by the gift of those in whose possession it now is. If it is time that they had it—*high* time, as I suppose no one will deny, it is time we had at least resolved to try to let them have it. I wonder the great national Societies hesitate to *resolve to try* to fill the world with Bibles within a given period. No individual or society knows what it can do till a trial is made; we can never foresee our ability to accomplish a great enterprise. They must always be undertaken in faith. I consider it quite as hazardous to predict that the world God has created and upholds cannot be put in possession of his Word in some twenty or thirty years, as to predict that it can. This may seem a short time for us to fill the world with Bibles, but it is a long time for them to be without Bibles. I think it is always best to resolve on that which ought to be done, and which greatly needs to be done, especially when one knows that the thing

is to be done within some period, and when the resolution is but to make the attempt, and even that is done only in reliance on divine help. A man may resolve on a great deal, when he is authorized to rely, and does actually rely on God to aid him in executing it. He may take on him a great weight of responsibility when he has such support. *One* can do all things through Christ strengthening him; and cannot some hundreds of thousands of Christians fill the world with Bibles through the same?

Why should not the efforts of the friends of Christ extend as far as do those of the foes of Christ? There is Satan and his associates. They go for the whole world. When the Lord asked Satan whence he came, he answered, "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." He had been over the whole ground. And shall not we go over the whole ground? Shall we not go as far seeking whom we may save, as he "seeking whom he may devour?" I know that he is a very powerful being, and we are weak; but he is not almighty, whereas, though we are not, our glorious Ally is.

I know too that the foes of Christ are *united*, and herein have a great advantage; while the friends of Christ are any thing but united. That desire which the Savior expressed, "that they all may be one," remains to be accomplished: and while that is the case, no wonder the *world* does not believe that God

has sent him. John 17 : 21. Christ does not seem to have expected that the world would believe, until his disciples were one. *Now*, they are not one, nor even two, but many. These friends have so many disputes to settle among themselves, that I do not know when they will be ready to proceed against the common foe. No other being ever had such divided friends as Christ. I do not say that all their controversies are unimportant, but I say they are none of them as important as the Lord's controversy with the earth.

But there is another more touching reason why the whole world should have the Bible as soon as possible. My mind has recently laid great stress upon it, and it was for the sake of presenting it that I undertook this article. Every part of earth is a vale of tears, and man is universally a mourner. Affliction is, or is to be, the lot of all. "Man is born to trouble," and no one can alienate this birthright. Now the Bible is the mourner's own and only book. There is nothing will do for him but this. Other books have been tried and found wanting. They do not go to the heart like God's. They don't wipe away a tear. But the Bible tells us of a hand that wipes away all tears from our eyes. And it is the very hand that made us. What a picture the Bible presents ! One everlasting arm underneath a man to support him, and the hand of the other wiping away his tears as they flow ! Was ever any thing like it ?

That picture ought to be exhibited every where. I have read what Howe, and Watts, and Flavel, and Baxter and Cecil, and I do not know how many others, have written for mourners, and it is all very well; but what is it all to what I have read in the Lamentations of Jeremiah, "HE DOTH NOT AFFLICT WILLINGLY?" Ah, there is more than half the human race that think he does afflict willingly. The cholera is regarded by the Hindoos as the cruel sport of one of their goddesses. O how it would lighten the sorrows of these mourners, did they but know that it is no one of a plurality of gods, but the Lord that afflicts them, and that he does it not willingly! Can we not in a quarter of a century give them this information? But this is only one of I know not how many similar passages. There is another that goes even beyond this? "In all their afflictions He was afflicted!" Here is sympathy for you—divine sympathy. Dost thou feel? He feels too. Does not the pitier always suffer as well as the pitied? Well, "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth." Such ideas as these never crossed a pagan mind. It never even occurred to him that God is a *father*.

I have thought how one of us in our affliction would like to be without the Bible, and what we would not give under such circumstances to obtain it; whether we would not give more to have it for ourselves, than we now give that the other members

of the great family of mourners may have it. I think we should increase our subscription to the Bible Society. We would not like to go along the vale of tears, and through the valley of the shadow of death, into which the former sometimes so suddenly sinks, without the 23d Psalm in our possession.

---

31. Mrs. M. L. Nevins.

Will you allow a friend, in his affliction, to occupy a little space in your valuable paper, with a subject deeply interesting to himself and to a few of your readers. Other readers can pass it by as destitute of general interest, and when their turn of bereavement comes, let them be indulged the like privilege of consecrating their private griefs on the public page.

The following notice was inserted in the secular newspapers of Baltimore, of November 12.

"Died, on Saturday, November 8, 1834, after a short illness, Mrs. Mary Lloyd, wife of the Rev. W. Nevins, aged 33 years. Though she fell a victim to the dreadful pestilence, yet she suffered no pain, and felt no terror, but with sweet submission to the divine will—with perfect confidence in the merits of

her Redeemer, and in humble hope of eternal life through his atonement, she gently breathed her spirit out to God, and left her body to sleep in Jesus until the morning of the resurrection."

For the secular newspaper that sufficed. But as one object of your publication is to record the doings of divine grace, a more extended memorial of what that grace did for the subject of this notice, especially in her last brief illness, cannot be out of place in its columns.

Mrs. Nevins was the daughter of the late Philip Barton Key, Esq. and was born in Georgetown, D. C. the 27th of August, A. D. 1801. For several years it was her privilege to enjoy the public ministry, and to receive the pastoral attentions of the Rev. C. P. McIlvaine, then rector of an Episcopal church in that place, and now bishop of the diocess of Ohio. For her soul he felt the tenderest concern. His prayers, his vigilance, and his efforts for its salvation were unremitted and untiring. Nor did he labor in vain. By the blessing of God on his fidelity, it is believed she became, in 1821, a subject of divine grace, and gave up the world for Christ. In one of her last conversations she spoke of this beloved man in terms of such affection as can be felt alone towards those who have been the instruments, in the hand of God, of winning souls to Christ. She felt that under God she owed every thing to him.

In November, 1822, she became the wife of the

Rev. W. Nevins, and removed to Baltimore, the scene of his ministry, where she continued to reside until her death. Of her devotedness as a wife, a daughter, a sister, a mother, a friend, the writer of this could speak in terms of unmeasured eulogy but it is enough that her record in this respect is engraven indelibly on many hearts. Her attachment to the cause of Christ was intelligent, sincere, and uniform.

Up to the evening of the 7th of November, she was, with an exception, deemed scarcely worthy of notice, in the possession of perfect health. It has been said of the cholera that it begins where other diseases end—with death. Almost literally true was this in her case. In a few hours after she was attacked, it became evident to those around her, and to herself, that the mortal blow had been struck. She needed no one to tell her of it; she felt within herself that life was fast ebbing away, and said of the weariness upon her, that it must be the weariness of death. When a friend, who stood by her, expressed her sorrow that she should take such a view of her case, she said, "Remember who hath said all things shall work together for our good. I submit to his will, and desire that he may do with me as seemeth to him good; though it is very painful to be separated from my dear husband and my sweet children. But I commit them all into the hands of the Savior. It will be a short separation, and then we shall meet

to part no more." Being asked if she felt afraid to die, she replied, "No: I had always expected that the prospect of death would almost frighten me out of existence; but now it has no terrors. I rely on Jesus, and feel I shall be happy when I die. It is better to depart and be with him, where I shall be completely freed from sin." To the friend already referred to, she said, "M. our intercourse here will soon be over. We have had many sweet and pleasant hours together; now I am going from you to my precious Jesus. Precious Jesus! Whom have I in heaven but thee?" Seeing her friend agitated and weeping, she said, "You must not do so. I am happy, very happy; and you must all pray that my eyes may be fixed *on the glories of crucified love to the last.*"

Once, with a sweet expression of countenance, she said, "How much is implied in those words: The peace of God which passeth all understanding!" She was asked if she relied on Jesus. She answered, "Entirely." Often she was interrogated as to his presence with her, and her replies were uniformly satisfactory. On one occasion, appearing to be engaged in deep thought, she was asked what she was thinking of. She said, "Mercy." Jesus and mercy—those are what the dying should think of. Much on her lips, and more in her thoughts was that name—name above every name—JESUS! "O, Lord Jesus, place underneath me thy everlasting

arms! Jesus, receive my spirit! O, Lord Jesus, receive me on the other side of Jordan!" were among her prayers to him. Nor did her heart spend its emotions in prayer alone; it was attuned to praise. She said, "I want a hymn sung." What hymn? it was asked. "The hymn about crossing over Jordan," she said; and it was sung; and soon after she crossed the stream—the narrow stream of death. Nor did Jesus wait for her on Canaan's bright side of the stream, but he came over to earth's dark shore of it, and himself took her across. That stream must be narrow, it was so soon passed; and all was so calm, there could not have been a ripple on its surface. O death, where was thy sting? O grave! A feeble, fearful female, with only a few hours to arm herself for the conflict, and to take leave of her babes, met thee, and was more than victor through Him who gave her the victory!

"Is that a death-bed where a Christian lies?
"Yes; but not his—'tis death, itself, there dies.'

---

32. What Strange Beings We Are!

How unreasonable! How inconsistent with ourselves! Even we, who are Christians. God does the very thing we ask him to do; and yet we complain

of him, or grieve immoderately, and almost inconsolably, because he does it! We ask that his will may be done; which implies, that our will, if it be in contrariety to his, should not be done; and this we sometimes in so many words express: "Not as we will, but as thou wilt." Well, God does his will, the very thing we wanted him to do; and yet we complain that he does not our will, the thing we deprecated his doing. We complain that he hears our prayer and grants us the desire of our heart. Was ever complaint so unreasonable? If, when we asked him to do his will, he had done ours, there would have been some semblance of reason for our complaint. Will we say that we never meant, in our hearts, what the terms of our petition expressed—that we never really desired his will should be done? Will any one acknowledge that he has uniformly been a hypocrite in the use of the Lord's prayer? Certainly, then, he ought not to complain that God has detected and chastised his hypocrisy. But, if he was sincere—if he desired what he asked for, then if he complains, he complains that God has gratified his desire. How perverse it is in a creature to say to God, time after time, when craving good, or deprecating evil, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt;" and then, because it is as God wills, and not as he wills, to think hard of God!

Every one who prays "Thy will be done," is aware that the will of God does not always coincide

with the inclinations of his creatures. It were wonderful if it should—wonderful indeed, if the will of an omniscient and infinitely perfect being should uniformly fall in with the capricious desires and inclinations of those who are finite, fallible, and sinful. Our own inclinations do not agree with each other. We are the subjects of conflicting desires: the will of God could not coincide with our inclinations without coinciding with contraries. Well, the prayer "Thy will be done," which we all consent to use, recognizing this want of coincidence, begs that in all such cases God will cause his will to be done rather than ours. It is a most reasonable request; no wonder God should comply with it. And yet we complain that in such cases of disagreement he does not carry out our inclinations instead of his own will. It is well, in view of such perverseness, that we have to do with a God of infinite patience. How very slow to anger our God is!

But I have not stated the case yet in all its strength. Complaint against God would be altogether unreasonable, if he caused only *his* will to be done. But while he causes his own, he causes our will also to be done; for it is our will, as we have told him, over and over again, that his will should be done. Why should he not gratify the inclination of ours, that his will should be done, as well as any other inclination which we have; for example, the inclination to retain a certain earthly enjoyment? He cannot gratify

our every inclination, for the gratification of one would be the denial of another. He must make a selection. It is not his fault that we have warring inclinations. He did not make us so; it is one of the inventions we have sought out. It belongs to us as marred by ourselves. Will it be said that God selects the less worthy inclination to gratify? I think not. What worthier inclination can we have, than that God's will should be done?

Is it the pain of having an inclination crossed, of which we complain? But let us complain of ourselves, that we have inclinations which need to be crossed. And, besides, would it give us no pain were we to discover, that in a particular instance, God submitted his own will to our inclination, and suffered us to be gratified in a certain respect, when his judgment was against it?

Fellow-Christians, we must give up the use of that petition, "Thy will be done," or else act more consistently. It will not do to be daily asking a thing, and daily lamenting that the thing is granted. If we would have *our* will done, let us alter the petition, and say, "*Our* will be done." Let us be sincere, if we are nothing else. Let us tell the Lord the very desires we have, however wrong they may be. That is better, certainly, than to have such desires, and tell him the contrary.

But I would by no means advise the alteration. I think we had much better keep to the old form, and

pray as the Lord taught his disciples. Yes, let us go on to say, "*Thy* will be done." It is our heavenly Father whom we address. Surely his children need not fear to have his will done. Let us consent with our whole heart that his will should be done, and towards us as well as towards others; and not merely in some things, but in all things; for why should not *all* his will be done, as well as any part of it? If we do so, by and by we shall have no inclinations contrary to his will. We shall be incapable of cross or disappointment. Every thing being as he would have it, would be also as we would have it.

If now a part of his will be hidden, until events disclose it, yet in other respects it is already revealed. We know, for instance, that it is our Father's *good pleasure* to give us the kingdom; and that it is our divine Savior's will that we should be with him where he is, that we may behold his glory. For the present let this suffice us. We shall be satisfied, when we awake in his likeness. In this expectation we should be satisfied now. Let us suffer God to reign, and let us not aspire to be his counselors. He taketh no counsel of any.

33. What very Strange Beings we are.

Yes! What *very* strange beings we are! We, who are sinners, expect to be treated with more deference than the innocent and holy. *Their* will is not done; nor do they desire it should be. We, who are of earth, expect privileges, as we in our ignorance account them, which they of heaven never think of claiming—the privilege, if not of holding the reins of government, yet of directing how they should be held; and of having things move on according to our inclinations. But should men, who are "of yesterday, and know nothing," rule, when angels, of an intellectual growth of thousands of years, cast their crowns at Jehovah's feet, and decline every thing but the most entire subjection?

But this is not all. We, who are the sons of God but by adoption, expect to be treated better than even God's only-begotten Son. Did not he suffer? And is it a mystery that we should? Was he "acquainted with grief," and shall we deem it strange and inexplicable that we should have experience of the same? Why should we marvel that the cup we deprecate does not pass from our lips, when a far more bitter cup did not pass from him? Shall we conclude that God is not a hearer of prayer, because a prayer of ours is not answered in kind, when he whom the Father always hears, prayed "let this cup

pass from me," and it was not done? Ah, you say, what a dark and mysterious Providence this is! But that was darker and more mysterious, which left the Son of God to be betrayed and crucified by his enemies. And what if his sufferings were to accomplish an immensely important object; how few, it may be supposed, of the intelligent mind that looked on, were aware of that? Besides, *may* not your sufferings be intended to accomplish an important object? *Are* they not certainly so meant? Do we not read of chastening, that "it *yieldeth* the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them who are exercised thereby;" and of affliction, that it "*worketh* for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?" Doubtless our sufferings are in their place as indispensable as were those of Christ.

Again, how reasonable and fit it is that the followers of a suffering Savior should themselves suffer—that they should drink of the cup of which he drank, and be baptized with the baptism wherewith he was baptized! How could we be like him without suffering! The Master was made "perfect through sufferings." How suitable that the disciples should not be made perfect, until after they "have suffered awhile!" He went through suffering to his dominion and glory. Why should we expect to reign with him, except we also suffer with him? Have we not always known that the cross is the condition of the crown? "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Jesus

was never known to smile on earth. But we reckon it strange and quite unaccountable, if we may not smile perpetually. He wept, while we regard each tear we shed as a mystery. What bereavement have any of God's adopted children ever suffered, the sense of which was so keen as that under which the only-begotten Son cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

We wonder that God does not hear every prayer we offer to him for every sort of thing, for health, for success in worldly matters, for exemption from bereavement, &c. never reflecting that if he did so, he would cease to be the governor of the world, except in name. He would be but our agent. He would reign in subordination to us. We should rule all things by the sway of our prayers. And where would be the difference between being on the throne ourselves, and directing him who occupies it? Who would care to hold the reins of government, if he might by the expression of his desire control the being in whose hands they are? What a world this would soon become, if every prayer, every expression of desire offered to God even by his own children, were answered according to the term of it! The voices of them in heaven who say, "Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth," would be hushed at once. O, shall God be infinitely wise and intelligent, and not employ his boundless wisdom and knowledge in managing the affairs of his creatures?

Shall his omniscience of all things in all periods exert no influence on his determinations? Shall he, to gratify us, hear a prayer which we would never offer if we saw what he sees, or what we ourselves may discover in the progress of a few short years? What strange beings we are to expect or desire such a thing!

Are we the only persons whose happiness is to be regarded by God in his dispensations? What if an event affect us with sorrow? The same event may affect others with joy, and God may be receiving their praises, while he hears our complaints. Are we alone to be considered, and not they? We grieve, perhaps, because one very dear to us has been taken from earth to heaven. We prayed importunately that it might be otherwise, but we were not heard. We know not what to make of it, and are on the point of murmuring. But was not thy friend's happiness to be taken into the account, as well as thine? Is the event so very mournful a one in the aspect of it which he contemplates? Does *he* grieve that he has made the exchange? If thy loss were equivalent to his gain, it would be unkind to complain of the dispensation. But what is the loss to thee in comparison with the gain to him? Is not thy friend satisfied with what God has done? And shall you indulge discontent? If you cannot but grieve, yet you should be willing to shed many tears for the sake of having all his wiped away. Can a soul too soon cease from

sin and sorrow! Can heaven be entered prematurely? Do you not read, and believe that it is better, far better, to depart and be with Christ?

How very inconsistent we are! If God, wearied with our discontent and complainings, should say, "Well, since you desire it, be it according to your mind," is there one Christian who would not instantly respond, "Nay, rather be it according to thine!" Who would exercise the fearful privilege of ordering a single event which is to affect him? And shall we contend for a privilege which we would not exercise if we had it? Shall we claim to choose in a case in which, if the right of choice were given us, we should immediately give it back into the hands of God?

---

34. Should it be according to thy Mind?

This question Elihu asked of Job. Things were not according to the mind of Job; and he complained, and was unhappy that they were not. He wanted them to be according to his mind. Perhaps it is so with you. But should it be according to thy mind, when there is another mind in the universe which is exercised and employed about the affairs of mortals: and that mind infinite, while yours is finite—

infallible, while yours is liable to a thousand errors and mistakes, in which you have often been detected even by yourself—possessed of all knowledge too, while you "are of yesterday, and know nothing?" Should it not be rather according to his mind? Should the inferior mind dispose and direct things?

If there were but one such mind the demand would not be quite so unreasonable. But should it be according to thy mind, when upon the same principle it should be according to the mind of others, your fellow-creatures, as wise and good as you, as much entitled and as well qualified to govern as you, whose minds nevertheless are in opposition to yours, so that it could not be according to theirs and yours also? Many of your views and wishes are at war with theirs. The gratification of your desires would often be incompatible with the gratification of theirs. Now should one creature rule all other creatures, and the creator too? Is it not better to let the supreme mind direct for all? when, moreover, this creature, who would rule all others, does not and cannot rule his own spirit? Methinks he who aspires to command and control others, should begin with commanding and controling himself.

But what still more unfits him to order things, is that his mind not only is at variance with other minds, but does not agree with itself. Sometimes it inclines to one thing, and again it inclines to the opposite. Nothing, not even the inconstant wind, is

so changeable as this mind, which would have things to be according to it. Should such a changeable mind rule, rather than he who is "in one mind," and whom none can turn—"the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning?"

But not only does this mind disagree with itself at *different* times, but often at the very same moment it is at war with itself; forming plans and cherishing inclinations which are opposite to each other; so that it could not accomplish one of its purposes without defeating another; and could not gratify itself in one respect without denying itself in another. Should it be according to a mind, according to which it *could* not be? We often have a mind to an end, when we have no mind to the means necessary to secure that end. Who has not a mind to be saved? But many have no mind to the way of being saved. Self-gratification is the thing men plead for, which implies that they have no mind to self-denial; and yet, if they would be saved, they must deny themselves. In order to have things according to their mind hereafter, they must consent that they should not be according to their mind now. Things cannot be according to their mind in time and in eternity both. How merciful it is in God not to let things be to our mind in this present brief life!

Should it be according to thy mind, when thou dost not always know thy own mind? In such a

case would you not have another to choose for you? Should one who has to hesitate and debate matters with himself, before he decides, have the direction of affairs in his hands? How long it sometimes takes you to make up your mind! What shall be done in the mean time? Must the course of nature and Providence be arrested, and the whole current of events stand still, till you have concluded what is best to be done?

Have you not sometimes had things according to your mind, and afterwards regretted that they were so? And would you run the risk of similar regrets hereafter? Have you not sometimes also had things contrary to your mind, and subsequently rejoiced that they were so? Have you never found crosses to be blessings in disguise? May not the present cross cover a blessing? And will you complain of a blessing, in whatever garb it may come?

Let God be heard before he is condemned. We concede this privilege to men. We consent to hear their reasons, before we censure their acts. God has appointed a day for the explanation of all things; and he may reveal the reasons of his conduct towards us even before the day of the revelation of his righteous judgment. It is uncertain whether we shall justify men, after we have heard their reasons; but do you not believe that if you knew the reasons of all God's proceedings in Providence, you would approve and sanction them all, and that your mind

would be in accordance with his? Why then not acquiesce in it now? Other beings, better and greater than you, do so. They decline having things according to their mind. And should not you? *Eli* said, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." And even *Christ* would not have it according to his mind. "Not as I will, but as thou wilt," was his conclusion, when the bitterest of all cups was at his lips.

Are you one of those who love God? Surely then it ought to satisfy you, when God assures you that under his government "all things work together for good to them that love him." Will you not let him choose what the things shall be, when he pledges himself that the result of them all shall be your good? Is it certain, if the things to befall you were chosen by you, that they would all conduce to your good? He says that he will withhold *no good thing* from them that walk uprightly. Is not this guarantee enough? "How shall he not," says one of his inspired apostles, with Christ "also freely give us all things?" "All things *are* yours." And will you complain that death is in the catalogue? or that tribulation and distress are among the things, in all which "we are more than conquerors through him that loved us?"

35. How Inconsistent We are!

How many examples of inconsistency one may give, without going beyond the pale of the church, into the wide domain of the world! We Christians consecrate ourselves to God for his use, and glory. Who is a Christian that has not done this? and what Christian has not done it often, and perhaps *recorded* the solemn act of self-consecration? Well, having done it repeatedly, and not by constraint, but willingly; and having thus not only acknowledged God's right to use us, and to glorify himself in and by us, but asked him to do it, we afterwards complain that he does it. We object to the use to which he puts us, though we never stipulated any particular use to which he should put us, but left him free to use us as should seem good to him. Yet now, when we see what he is going to do with us, though, in consenting that he should do with us according to his pleasure, we consented to that very thing, we demur, and would dictate what use he should make of us, and how glorify himself by us! Do I not justly denominate this inconsistency? May not God do what he will with his own, when it is his own on so many accounts, and by so perfect a right—his own, not only by creation, by preservation, and by purchase, but by our consent and covenant with him, and oft expressed desire that it should be his; and when

moreover he engages that in using us according to his will and for his glory, he will not fail to secure our highest interests, our best good, our eternal well-being? We do what we will with our own, though it be our own in a very subordinate sense, and though we use it exclusively for our pleasure or profit; and we concede the same right to our fellow-creatures. What if we were to say to a fellow-man, "this is yours; you made it: you daily renew your labor on it, to keep it in repair; you also paid a price for it. I surrender it up to you. I desire it should be yours. You are much better qualified to use it properly than I am," and then afterwards object to his using it as his own? How unreasonable it would be in us! How we should contradict ourselves. And is it not as unreasonable to hold similar language to God, and then complain of him?

We also consecrate to God our families—wife and children, and all. We say "These also are thine, Lord. Use them likewise for thy glory. We consecrate them to thee." Well, being consecrated, he uses them as sacred to him; and presently, having no farther use for one of them on earth, and wanting him in heaven to fill a place there, he takes the person thither—changes his residence and society—promotes him—brings him nearer to court. Having some time before justified and begun to sanctify the individual, he at once perfects the work of holiness in him, and beatifies, glorifies him—frees him from

all sin, sorrow, pain and dread; and wipes away his last tear. The subject of all this is in an ecstacy of joy and gratitude for what has been done to him, and would not for worlds leave the choice spot which he now occupies. Well, and what then? Why, we object, and complain, and think it hard, and almost weep dry the fountain of tears, and refuse to be comforted! and that though it was God who took that member of the family; and though he took but his own, and took it to himself; and though we are so soon ourselves to follow to the same abode; and though it was always understood and agreed upon that God should take each just when he pleased. It was one of the articles of the covenant we entered into with him. He claimed and we conceded the right. We received that creature with the express understanding that we were to give him up, when called for. We always knew it was not a gift outright, but a loan. And now shall we complain of the recall of the loan?

Oh how easy it is to convince the judgment—to silence the mind! But the *heart*—the unmanageable heart, *feels* on as before. Our arguments go not down to that deep seat of emotion. *There* is still the void, the tumult, the ache, the longing. Only God can reason with the heart. At no bidding but his, will it ever be still and satisfied.

Again, we consecrate our *property* to God. We say, "We being thine, all ours is also thine. Thine

be it. Take and use it." But let God touch it, to take any part of it away, and how distressed, and well nigh desperate it makes some who profess to be Christians! and how unlike a thing sacred, and by our act made sacred to God, we use it. "Holiness to the Lord" we inscribe on all our property, and then utterly disregarding the label, we use it *exclusively for ourselves.*

So also we devote *life* to God. But he must not on any account take it. How we tremble when we apprehend that he is going to receive what we offer to him! O death, can it be that thou hast lost thy sting? Blessed Jesus, how reluctant thy disciples are to have thee come and take them to thyself! Forgive us—we know not what we do.

Once more, what strange, inconsistent beings we are! If it be one characteristic of the righteous man, that he "sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not," how much more essential to rectitude must it not be to comply with the terms of the oath, which we have sworn, not to man, but to God; and when the tendency of the oath is not our hurt, but our greatest, and most lasting good! As Christians, we have sworn to God. We have taken the sacrament —and that often, and not without deliberation. Many oaths are on us. And now shall we change? Shall we draw back? Shall we refuse to perform, or, as the case may be, to submit, because of some trifling inconvenience, some transient evil, which God can

and will make to conduce to our ultimate and eternal good?

---

36. The Pity of the Lord.

There is a great deal of the Bible which seems not to be believed even by those who profess and suppose that they believe it all. And this is true, if I mistake not, of what some would call the *best* parts of the Bible—those parts, for example, which speak of the kind feelings of God towards his creatures, and especially towards those of them who fear him. I suspect that even Christians read them with a sort of incredulity. They seem to them almost too good to be true. But why should not God feel towards us as he says he does? Is he not our Father? Has he not nourished and brought us up as children? Why should it be thought a thing incredible with us, that God should feel as a father does towards his children? I never read that 103d Psalm, but I stop at the 13th verse: "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him;" and I read it a second time, and I find myself asking, not merely in admiration, but with some degree of unbelief: "Can it be that the Lord pities us, and pi-

ties us like as a father his children? I know the Lord is *good* to all. How can he, who is love, be other than benevolent? It were contrary to his nature not to be. But pity expresses more than goodness—more than benevolence. There is an unmovedness in mere goodness. But in pity the heart melts, and the eye weeps, and the whole soul is moved as from its seat. And this is especially true of a parent's pity. Can it be possible that God pities after that manner?" O yes, it is possible; and it has passed out of the limits of possibilities into the circle of facts. The Lord pitieth them that fear him—pitieth, as a father, *you*, if you fear him. His feelings towards you are fully up to those which you can conceive, or from experience know to be those of the most tender parent towards his children. Yes, God pities you. That nature which is love, feels and exercises compassion towards you in your sorrows and trials. That great heart is affected by your misery and griefs, as our hearts are, when at the sight of suffering we weep. Yes, Christian, God is sorry for you. Oh what a thought this for an hour of trial! What a sentiment this to bear suffering with! What if thou dost suffer? Is it not enough that God pities thee? We should be willing to suffer, if he will sympathise. We should never know what divine sympathy is, if we did not suffer. This one consideration—that God pities, is worth more than all philosophy.

There is much that is interesting and lovely in pity, *whoever* be the object of it. There is, however, a peculiar tenderness, which belongs to the pity felt for suffering *children*. Nothing goes so keenly to the heart as the child's tear and tale of sorrow. And is the pity of the Lord like this? Yes. It is not said that he pities, as man pities man; or as one pities children; or even as a parent pities children; but as a father pities *his* children, so the Lord pities. "Like as a father." Like as one who most affectionately loves, pities the dear object of his love, his child, his own child, when that child is sick, and he looks upon his altered countenance, and with a weeping eye watches over him day and night, and hears his moans, and is imploringly appealed to by him for relief, which it is not in his power to give; like as he pities, *so* the Lord pities. So inexpressibly feels he towards them that fear him. Such deep and undefinable emotions as a parent's heart is occupied with, when he says "my poor child." *So* the Lord pities. Can it be? It is even so. Well then, come want, come sickness, come sorrow, if such pity may come with it. The relief exceeds the suffering. The support is greater than the burden. It not only bears up, but lifts up the soul.

But *now* does a father pity? Does he pity so as never to chastise? Oh no. "What son is he whom his father chasteneth not?" He chastens out of pity. But he so pities that he is infinitely far from tak-

ing delight in the smallest sufferings of his children, even when it becomes his duty for their good to inflict them. It hurts him more to chastise, than them to be chastised. In all their affliction he is afflicted; and more afflicted than they. Have you never corrected a child, and gone away and wept in pure pity for him? Have you never denied him something, and found it a greater self-denial? Is such your heart towards your children? Such is God's towards his. "He doth not afflict willingly."

Again, a father so pities that he would spare or relieve his child, if he could; that is, if he had the power; or having the power, it were proper he should exercise it. A parent sometimes has the power to relieve and does not exert it. The principle of benevolence within him which proposes the greatest good of his child for the longest period, forbids that he should yield to the impulse of compassion, which calls for the rendering of immediate relief. He pities his child too much to relieve him. So the Lord pities. He has always the power to relieve. And often he exerts it. He always would, if it were, in view of all considerations, proper and benevolent that he should. He, who for thee spared not his own Son, would spare thee every sorrow thou hast, and would relieve thine every pain, but "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth."

A father so pities his children that he would, if he could, even suffer in their stead. More than one

father has said, "Would God I had died for thee, my son, my son!" And is the pity of the Lord like a father's in this particular too? Yes. *So* the Lord pities. So he has pitied. He *could* suffer in the stead of those he pitied—and he *did*. "Surely he *hath* borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." He has even died for us. O what pity!

A father so pities his children, that to promote their comfort and happiness, he will spare no pains and no expense. How freely the most avaricious parent will spend, if the necessities of a child require it! The wants and sorrows of his child can open even his heart. Such is the pity of the Lord. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. Having one Son, his only-begotten, he gave even him for us.

Let the child of God derive from these considerations inexpressible consolation. O think that he, in all thy sorrows, pities thee. Yes, thy God feels for thee. Thy sufferings go to his heart. There is one in heaven who, from that exaltation, looks down upon thee; and the eye that watches over you, wept for you once, and would, if it had tears, weep for you again. He knoweth your frame. He remembereth that you are dust. He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. It was he who, when his disciples had nothing to say for themselves, made that kind apology for them, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." He can be touched

with the feeling of all your infirmities. You may cast all your cares on him, for he careth for you. All through this vale of tears you may rest assured of his sympathy; and when the vale of tears declines into the valley of the shadow of death, not his sympathy only will you have, but his inspiriting presence, and his timely succor. And after that, what will not his bounty be, whose pity has been so great? When there is no longer any occasion for pity—when misery is no more, and sighing has ceased, and God's hand has for the last time passed across your weeping eyes, and wiped away the final tear, what then will be the riches of his munificence? What then will he not *do* for you, having so *felt* for you? You know a father feels a peculiar affection for a child that has been afflicted, and that has cost him a great deal. How will our compassionate Redeemer cherish and caress those who have come out of great tribulation, and for whom he went through so much more himself! What must be the glory of that place to which he will take them, after he shall have made them perfect through sufferings! What exalted honors, what ecstatic joys must he not have in reserve for them, whom he came down here to weep with, and now takes up thither to rejoice with himself! And now that they have ceased to sin, and are perfectly conformed to his image, what will not be his *complacency* in them, when his pity towards them is so great in this im-

perfect state, in which their suffering is always mingled with sin!

Well then, since we are the objects of such pity, let us be its subjects too. Let us pity, as we are pitied. Cared for ourselves, let us care for others. Let their case reach our hearts, as ours reached God's. Let us, for whom so many tears have been shed, be not sparing of our tears for others' woes. Nor let us give to misery merely the tear, but speak the word of consolation, and reach out the hand of help.

---

37. Five Negatives.

It is known that two negatives in English are equivalent to an affirmative. They destroy each other. But it is not so in Greek. They *strengthen* the negation; and a third negative makes it stronger still, and so a fourth, and a fifth. How strong *five* negatives must make a negation! But do five ever occur? Whether they ever occur in the Greek classics, I do not know; but in the Greek of the New Testament there is an instance of the kind. And what is that? Are the five negatives used to strengthen any threatening? No. They are connected with a *promise*, one of the "exceeding great and precious promises," which are given unto us

The case occurs in Heb. 13: 5, "for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." There five negatives are employed. We translate but two of them; but there they all are, as any one may see who looks into his Greek Testament. Now, they need not all have been there. They are not all necessary to express the simple idea that God will never forsake his people. There must have been *design* in multiplying negatives so. I do not believe the phraseology was accidental, and I think it not difficult to guess the design. God meant to be believed in that thing. He would secure the confidence of his children in that particular. He knew how prone they were to doubt his constancy—how strongly inclined to that form of unbelief—and how liable to be harassed by the dread of being forsaken by him; and he would therefore make assurance more than doubly sure. So, instead of saying simply, "I will not leave thee," which alone would have been enough, he adds, "nor forsake thee;" and instead of leaving it thus, "I will not leave thee, I will not forsake thee," he uses language equivalent to the following: "I will not, I will not leave thee; I will never, never, never forsake thee." There is a stanza, which very faithfully, as well as beautifully, expresses it —

"The soul that on Jesus hath lean'd for repose,
"I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
"That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
"I'll never—no never—no never forsake."

How in earnest God appears to be in this matter! How unworthy it is in his children, after such an assurance as this, to suspect that he will forsake them! He *cannot*. It is *impossible* for God to lie. Here one who was never known to break his word, assures his people, each of them individually, and five times over in a single sentence, of his continued presence with them. Under similar circumstances, what *man* of reputed veracity would be discredited? and shall not the God of truth be believed in a like case?

---

38. How to Dispose of Care.

There is such a thing as *care*. Who does not know it by experience? Who has not *felt* it at his heart? How heavily it presses there! and it *pierces* too. It is a *burden;* and it has also a *sting*. Nothing is more unfriendly to happiness than care. It is hard being happy with a load on the heart. The objects of care are almost innumerable. What shall I eat; what shall I drink; and wherewithall shall I be clothed, are only a few of its anxious interrogations, and they are among the least important of them. These concern ourselves; but care often forgets self in its solicitude for others. Parents, and especially mothers know what I mean by this. But I need

not attempt to explain a word that expresses what we all feel.

There is a care both for ourselves and others which God himself has cast upon us; and of which it were sinful to attempt to make any other disposition than he has made of it. But over and above this, there is a large amount of solicitude and anxiety which we lay upon ourselves, and which is unnecessary, useless, injurious. This is the care that is unfavorable to happiness. The other is friendly to it. It is very desirable to get rid of it, since it does us harm, and does no one good. Nothing is more hostile to the successful care of the soul than the pressure and poignancy of the care of which I speak. "Careful and troubled about many things," we intermit or entirely overlook the care of the "one thing needful." But what shall we do with it—how get rid of it, since to bear it is so painful to our feelings, and often so ruinous to our better interests? *Divide* it with others we may to some little extent. There is such a thing as sympathy. There is such an operation as *unburdening* the mind to a fellow-creature. And I will not deny that there is some relief in it. Yet the very etymology of the word *sympathy* evinces that it is no remedy. It is, after all, a *suffering together*. A great deal of what constitutes sympathy is grief that we can but grieve—sorrow that we cannot succor. Mixing tears does indeed diminish their bitterness, but weeping with

those that weep does not wipe away their tears. They weep on, and the only difference is that we weep with them, and our tears may be said to dilute theirs.

There is a better way of disposing of care than to cast it on our fellow-creatures. Indeed, what fellow-creatures can we find who have not enough of their own to bear, without receiving an additional burden from us? What friend has not himself surplus care to dispose of?

There are some who cast off care without reference to what becomes of it. They sing, "Begone dull care." These are the reckless. Care may go at their bidding, but the worst of it is, it is sure to return again, and it comes back a heavier burden—duller than ever. This is not the way to dispose of care. Yet there is a way whereby all excess of anxiety may be effectually removed, and the heart be left with all its tender affection, and yet with no more solicitude than such as the blessed in heaven might feel without diminution of happiness. *It is to cast care on God.* That is the true and only effectual way to dispose of care. He *can* take the burden, however huge and heavy. You do not doubt that; but you ask, "*Will* he?—*may* I cast it on him? I, such a one as I, cast my cares, the whole multitude and burden of them, on such a being as God? I know the government of the mighty universe, and the providence which extends to the minute equally as to

the magnificent—reaching low as to the fall of the sparrow, and the numbering of the hairs of the head, does not distract or burden him. I know he can take a larger charge and not feel it. But will he? Will such greatness stoop to such littleness?—such holiness come down to such vileness?" Yes, it will, for condescension is one characteristic of greatness; and "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." But why do I reason? Does not the Holy Ghost say by David, "cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee"—and by Peter, "casting all your care upon him"—and by Paul, "be careful for nothing"—and does not Immanuel himself say, "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest?" No longer ask if you may, but use your privilege. Here is your authority. The Lord says you may do it. Nay more, commands you to do it. It is your duty, as well as your privilege. So far is it from being presumption to cast your care on God, it is a sin not to do it.

This is the way to dispose of care; and it is no matter how much there is of it. God will take it all. It is no burden to him. Many have made this disposition of their cares, and all testify how willingly he took and bore them; and if at times they took back the burden, yet willingly he received it again, when again it was cast upon him.

There is a reason given by Peter for casting care on God, that is inexpressibly touching. He says,

"casting all your care on him," and then follows no flourish of rhetoric, no parade of reasons, but this —O how happily selected, I would say, but that he wrote by inspiration, which does every thing felicitously—"for he careth for you." Why should you care for yourself, since God cares for you? Ah, here is a topic not for the meditation of an hour merely, but of an eternity. *He* careth for *you*. Can it be? O why should he? What a thought to carry through this vale of tears, and to go down with into the deeper valley of death, that God cares for me! He concerns himself about me. Let the scholar look at the original. The English is good enough, but the Greek is still more interesting. God has me on his heart. Some poor saints think nobody cares for them. But God does. Is not that enough? He that regards the cry of the raven, and gives all the fowls of heaven their food, and decks the lilies of the field, doth *much more* care for you. He concerns himself for his *creatures*, will he not much more for his *children?* Are ye not of much more value, whom no less a price could redeem than the blood of his Son? Let this suffice for you.

I know not any thing that goes so soon and surely to my heart, as the sight of a poor sobbing, or sorrowfully looking child, an orphan, or worse than parentless, whom no one seems to care for. But if I weep at such a sight, it dries up my tears to think that there is, after all, one who cares for the poor

child, even he who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me." O come, let us cast our care on God. Let us go to Jesus for rest. In him we shall find sympathy such as man can feel, with support such as only God can afford. There we shall meet with such pity as at first weeps with the sufferer, and then wipes away his tears. Surely he who bare our *sins* will not refuse our *cares*. "Surely he *hath* borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

---

39. Do you enjoy Religion?

I do not ask you if you *possess* religion, but do you *enjoy* it? Does it make you happy? The question is not whether being, as you hope, a religious person, you are also happy; but is it your religion which makes you happy? Are you happy, because religious? A person may acknowledge God, and have joy, and yet not "joy in God." Perhaps you will say it *helps* to make you happy—that is, religion and certain other things together make you happy. But this answer is not satisfactory. Religion must more than help to make you happy. If it only helps, it does no more than many other things. *They* help. In that case religion might be

needful to happiness, even as money is reckoned by many to be; but it could not be pronounced to be *the one thing needful*. Religion ought to make you happy without the aid of any thing else. You should enjoy it, though you had nothing else to enjoy. Habakkuk says, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." He regarded religion as able alone to make him happy. And are we not commanded to be happy in religion alone—to "rejoice in the Lord," and that "evermore?" Should we be commanded to be happy in it, if it needed some assistance to make us happy?

Religion is both exactly *adapted* and entirely *adequate* to make its subjects happy. It supplies the soul with a portion; and what does the soul want to make it happy but a suitable and sufficient portion? This the religious man has. THE LORD is his portion. Is not that a portion to make him happy? Is it not *good* enough, and *large* enough? If the world can make one happy, as some suppose, cannot much more the Maker of all worlds, and the owner of the universe? This portion is infinite, so that it can never be exhausted; and it is eternal, so that it can never fail. And while religion gives

us a portion, what a protector, what a provider, what a comforter it affords us! The best of fathers, and the friend that is more constant than a brother! Then, what present good it yields, and what promises it makes of greater good to come! What a prospect it holds out! O what hopes it inspires! The Christian has all these to rejoice in—Christ Jesus, the "exceeding great and precious promises," the first fruits of the Spirit, and the hope of glory. Can any one say what is wanting in religion to make one happy?

Religion *has* made many happy. *Peter*, in his first general epistle, within the compass of only three verses, speaks of Christians as not only rejoicing, but rejoicing "greatly," yea, "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." He speaks of it not as a *duty*, or as a *privilege*, but as a *fact*. They did so. And what they so rejoiced in was Jesus Christ, and the prospect of the incorruptible inheritance, both which Christians have the same warrant to rejoice in now. Now, if religion made these happy, why should it not make others happy? Why should one enjoy it, and another not enjoy it, if both possess it? It was intended to make all its subjects happy—*very* happy.

I ask then, does it make you happy? Do you *enjoy* religion? Now, do not evade the question. What is to become of us, if religion does not make us happy? If we do not enjoy it here, how shall we enjoy it hereafter! Barely to possess it hereafter

would not satisfy, even if such a thing could be. How can a religion which does not make us happy on earth, make us happy in heaven? The religion of heaven is the same in *kind* with that of earth. The only difference is in *degree*. The religion of earth is communicated from heaven. It must be of the same nature with it.

Besides, if our religion does not make us happy, how do we do our duty? We are *commanded* to rejoice. It is a part of *practical* Christianity to be happy. It is obedience to a precept. It belongs to the character of the *doer* of the word. Moreover, how are we to have satisfactory evidence that we possess true religion, if we have not joy in it? Suppose we had not *love*, would we be Christians then? No, certainly; for without charity a man is nothing. But why can we not be Christians without love? Because it is the fruit of the Spirit. And is not *joy* also the fruit of the Spirit? If love is the first named of the nine, joy is the second. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, &c." Gal. 5 : 22, 23. And these are not said to be the *fruits* of the Spirit. It is not the *plural* form that is used. They are not distinct productions. They are all one *cluster*—"the *fruit* of the Spirit." Now, since we have not love, we conclude we have not the Spirit; why should we not conclude the same if we have not joy? I know it may be said that there are many things to interfere with Christian joy. But while these may and do dimi-

nish it and interrupt it, they do not therefore annihilate it. There was much to interfere in the case of those to whom Peter wrote. They were "in heaviness through manifold temptations." Nevertheless they rejoiced "greatly."

You see now why I ask you if you *enjoy* religion. You perceive that it is no insignificant question. Many profess to have religion, but are conscious that they do not enjoy it. They hope they are religious, but know they are not happy. They trust that God is their portion, but they have no joy in him. Indeed some are astonished that we should speak of religion as a thing to be enjoyed. They regard it rather as a thing to be *endured*—as a sort of *penance*, a system of *privation*. And in so far as it is not suffering, it is toil—a something composed of *penance* and *task*. When they betake themselves to any thing of a religious nature, they feel that they *must*. A sort of dire necessity constrains them. Such a religion may prepare a person for hell, but how it is to qualify him for heaven, I see not. And a religion which does not qualify a person for heaven, certainly does not answer the purpose.

Many persons *lament* that their religion does not make them happy, and they wonder why it is. I suspect it is because they depend no more upon it to make them happy. They look for enjoyment too much to other sources. Perhaps, however, the reason they have so little enjoyment in religion is that

they have so little religion to enjoy. Now those who appear to have so little, should seriously inquire if they have any.

But some may say, "Religion *sometimes* make us happy." But why only sometimes—why not always? The command is, "Rejoice in the Lord *always*;" and the same reason exists for being happy in religion at all times, as at any time. If you rejoice in the world, no wonder if your joy is often interrupted; but if God is your God, and he is evermore the same, why should you not rejoice in him evermore? But does not the Lord sometimes call to sorrow? True, but even then he does not call *from* joy. Joy and sorrow are perfectly compatible. Were they not coincident in the experience of Paul? "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing," he says. If there exists causes of sorrow which operate, that does not annihilate the causes of joy. They should operate too. If you seem to have nothing else to rejoice in, yet there are your sorrows; rejoice in them; well may you, if they work for you "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Did not Paul "glory in tribulations *also*."

Let not the reader rest satisfied until he *enjoys* religion. How are we to die by a religion which we do not enjoy? What can one enjoy when the world is receding, if he cannot enjoy God?

40. Lovest Thou Me?

We make a profession of Christianity, and go along from day to day, and perhaps from year to year, supposing that we are Christians, and that all is well with us; that we are equipped for the encounter of death, and prepared to meet our Judge, and take our place in heaven, when it may be we are not able to answer till after long consideration, and then with not a little doubt and misgiving, so simple a question in Christian experience, as "Lovest thou me?" Peradventure the utmost we dare say, after all our reflection and self-research, is, "I really do not know how it is. I hope I love him." This will never do. The question, "Lovest thou me," is one which every person, making any pretensions to Christianity, ought to be able to answer affirmatively at once. Indeed we ought not to give our Savior any occasion to ask the question. It is very much to our discredit—it should make us blush and be ashamed—that our manifestations of love to him are of so equivocal a character as to leave the very existence of the affection doubtful, and to render it necessary for him to interrogate us in reference to it. There are many less lovely beings than Christ that have not to ask us if we love them. We act in such a manner towards them that they cannot for a moment doubt the fact of their being dear and precious to us. They do not want our words to assure them. They

have our uniform conduct and deportment making the silent yet most forcible declaration. Has your parent to ask you if you love him, or your child? Have husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, and friends, to ask this question of each other? O no—none but Christ has to ask us if we love him! And he has not only to ask the question, but to wait sometimes a long while, for an answer. We have to consider and go into an examination, and call up our conduct to the bar of judgment, and dissect our very hearts, before we can venture an answer. This is strange. It is not so in other cases. If a relative or a friend, more for the gratification of a renewed expression of our love, than from any doubt of its existence, ask us if we love him, do we keep him waiting for an answer? Do we say, "Well, I must consider. I must examine myself. I hope I do." No, indeed. We are ready with our affirmative. Nor is it a cold *yes* we return; but we express our surprise at the question. "Love you!" And we assure the person in the most emphatic and ardent language that we love him, and all our manner shows him that we speak out of the abundance of the heart. But we do not express surprise that our Savior should ask us if we love him. We do not wonder at the question from him. We know too well how much reason we give him to doubt our affection.

Why should there be such a difference in favor of the earthly objects of our love? Is not Christ as lovely

as those other beings—as deserving of affection—as attractive of love? He is *altogether lovely.* Are they? He possesses infinite loveliness. Nor does that express all. He *is* essential Love. Nor love at rest, but in motion; nor far off, but near; exerting infinite energy in action, exercising infinite fortitude in suffering; earth the scene, and man the object. It is he who asks, "Lovest thou me?" And he of whom he asks it is this man, the intelligent spectator of all this love; aye, its chosen and cherished object.

If Christ was not nearly related to us, as those other beings are, that might be the reason of the difference in their favor. But who is so closely related to us, so intimately joined to us, as Christ? He formed us, and in him we live, move, and have our being. Does not that imply nearness? Is he divine, while we are human? He is human as well as divine—one of the brotherhood of flesh and blood. He came down to earth to take our nature on him, nor went up to heaven again without it. There it is—our humanity allied to divinity, divinity radiant through it, on the throne. Is he not related to us? He says of every one who does the will of his Father, "the same is my brother, and sister and mother." That alone relates us to him more than all human ties. But that is not all. Christ is the husband of the church. He is one with it. If we are his disciples, he is the vine and we the branches—he the head

and we the members. Yea, "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Does not this express a near and intimate relation? Now it is one so near to us, so joined to us, who asks, "Lovest thou me?"

Have our friends, whom we are so conscious of loving, done more for us than Christ, or made greater sacrifices for us? Are we under greater personal obligations to them?

"Which of all our friends, to save us,
"Could or would have shed his blood?
"But this Savior died to have us
"Reconciled, in him, to God."

And yet we know we love those friends, but this friend! we know not whether we love him or not—we only hope we do!

Do other beings find such difficulty in loving Christ? and are they at such a loss to know when they do love him? O no. His Father testifies, "This is my *beloved* Son, in whom I am well pleased." And he is called also his *well-beloved*, his *dear* Son. All the *angels* of God love and worship him, and delight to ascribe infinite worthiness to him. It is only *men* who find any difficulty in loving Christ. It is only the *human* heart that hesitates and hangs back. Is there any reason for this—any reason why men should be the last to love Christ, and why they should love him least of all who behold his loveli-

ness? I see none, but I think I see reasons many, and strong, and tender, why we should be first, and most forward, and warmest in our affection to him. How many worlds he passed to alight on this! How many created natures he rejected, when from all of them he chose the *human* to be united to divinity! Others have sinned, yet not their sins bare he, but ours. It may be said of other creatures, "He loved them;" but of men only can it be added, "and gave himself for them." And yet who is so backward to love him as redeemed man? Not tardy merely. O how parsimonious of his love—loving him so little, that often he cannot ascertain if he loves at all! Shame, where is thy blush; and sorrow, where thy tear?

O how different Christ's love to us from ours to him! We have not to ask him if he loves us. If any one should ever ask that question of Jesus, he would say, "Behold my hands and my feet." He bears on his very body the marks of his love to us. But what have we to point to as proofs of our love to him? What has it *done* for him? What *suffered?* O, the contrast! His love, so strong! Ours, so weak! His, so ardent! Ours, so cold! His, so constant! Ours, so fickle! His, so active! Ours, so indolent! So high, so deep, so long, so broad his love, its dimensions cannot be comprehended, it passeth knowledge; while ours is so limited, and so minute, it eludes research!

" Dear Lord! and shall we ever live
" At this poor dying rate?
" Our love so faint, so cold to thee,
" And thine to us so great?"

---

41. The Light of the World.

How are we to know whether, being *nominally* Christians, we are also *really* Christians? It is important to know if we possess the *thing* signified by Christianity. The mere *name* and fame of the thing will be of little use to us.

Now the Bible tells us what Christians are. If then, *we* are what the book says Christians are, we are Christians. Every body admits this—that a *scriptural* Christian is without doubt a *real* one. But some seem to hesitate about admitting the converse of the proposition, that if we are *not* what the Bible says Christians are, we are not Christians. The reason they hesitate can only be that they perceive or fear the latter conclusion makes against themselves; for the one is as clearly and certainly true as the other. What use could there be in statements declaring what Christians are, if individuals may be Christians without being what Christians are thus declared to be? Indeed, what *truth* would there be in such statements? That is no character-

istic of a class, which does not belong to all the individuals of the class. The declaration, "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature," is neither useful nor true, if some are in Christ who are not new creatures. The same may be said of the assertion, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," if a solitary individual is pardoned and freed from condemnation who still walks after the flesh. There is neither sense nor sincerity in it; nor in this other passage, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts," if some are Christ's who have never put the flesh and its lusts to that kind of death.

It must be admitted that if we are not what the Bible says Christians are, we are not Christians in fact. We may as well admit it first as last. Christ says we are to be judged by his word; not by any favorite author of ours, Blair or Paley, or whoever he may be; not by any sermon we may have heard from this or that minister; not by the standard that may have been set up in some conversation with an eminent divine; not by the opinion entertained in the circle in which we move; nor by what seems to stand to our reason. There will be no spreading out of these, when the Judge shall sit. The Bible will be the only book of law and authority opened then.

I know very well there is nothing *new* in what I

am saying. Any body can say it, and say it as well. Every body knows it already. But it is one of the *old* things that we need to be often reminded of. I know nothing we are more prone to forget than these *common-place* truths. It is what we know best, and most firmly believe, that we fail most to consider and lay to heart. The most *familiar* truths have always been the truths by men most disregarded.

But let us hear what the Bible says Christians are, for I did not intend so long an introduction. Well, the Bible says, among other things, that they are *the light of the world.* The blessed Jesus himself is the speaker, and he is addressing his disciples, and he says to them "YE ARE the light of the world." Observe, he does not say, "Ye *may be*, if you are careful to live up to your privileges;" or "Ye *ought to be*—it is your duty;" or "Ye *shall be* —by and by, when you have have made greater progress in religion;" but he speaks of it as a present *matter of fact*, "Ye *are* the light of the world." —So it seems that Christians *shine.* We talk of a shining Christian, meaning to distinguish such a one from Christians in general. But there is no Christian who is not a shining one. Every Christian emits light. Paul testifies of the Christians of Philippi that they shone as lights in the world. They were what Christ said his disciples were. And must not Christians of our cities and villages be the same?

It also appears that Christians are not merely *receivers.* They *give out*—they *communicate.* That is their character. They do not live merely or mainly for themselves. A candle is not lighted for its own convenience, but for the benefit of others, that it may give light unto all that are in the house. Some people think it is enough if they personally *enjoy* religion. But that is not the case. No *man* liveth to himself—much more does no *Christian.*

There are *two* objects for which Christians shine. One is to *discover themselves,* that the world may know what Christians are, and so be led to emulate the character. This our Savior contemplates when he says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." We are to emit light for others to see by; and it is that they may see our *good works.* All Christians perform good works. They are all of them *doers.* They are the most *practical* men in the world, though regarded by many as visionaries. There are, to be sure, *speculators* and theorists enough in the church, but real Christians are *working men.* But what is the use in our good works being seen? Why is it not enough that they be *done.* Does not humility dictate that they should be concealed, rather than exposed? The thing is impracticable. "A city that is set on a hill *cannot* be hid." Were the thing possible the attempt at concealment might be proper

enough, if there were no others to be influenced by the sight of our good works. Whether a candle in an *uninhabited* house be on a candlestick or under a bushel, is a matter of little consequence; but not so if there be people in the house. The Christian's good works are to be visible; not that he may be applauded for them, but that men may thence be led to glorify God. Now, a question. Do *we* shine? And by the light which we evolve, do observers see our good works? Have we any good works for them to see? And are they such good works as, they seeing, will instinctively refer to the grace of God as their cause, and so be led to glorify him? We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that we should *shew forth* the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

I would not have any one suppose that a Christian is to make an effort to let his good works be seen—to be ostentatious of them. No, he is only to *let* his light shine. He is *active* in doing good works, but quite passive in *shewing* them. A luminous body makes no effort in emitting light. Indeed it cannot help shining. A Christian has only in all his intercourse with men to act out the Christian spirit, and be governed by the fear of God, and the principles of his holy religion, and the thing is done. The light is emitted, and the good works are seen. And this is the way, under God, to commend truth

to the conscience, to reach the hearts of men, and make converts to God. Yes, this is the way. "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by *your good works, which they shall behold*, glorify God in the day of visitation." Another question. Is this what *we* are doing—shining so that men, knowing we profess the religion of Jesus, see, in looking at us, how pure, lovely, excellent, and divine a religion it is, and are led to say, "Verily, it must be from God, and we must embrace it too—we will be Christians?"

The other object for which Christians shine is to *enlighten others*. But on this I cannot now enlarge. Only this I would observe. See how *far* Christians shine! They do not merely illumine some little sphere. They are the light of *the world*. Their influence reaches to the ends of the earth.

Would we make good our Savior's assertion with respect to ourselves—would we be the light of the world, let us *first* take heed that the light which is in us be not darkness: and let us *next* have a care that our light make discovery to others of good works. Let us *do* them. Then, as for those who see us, it is their fault, not ours, if they are not converted. And as for those who are too far off to see us, it only remains that we *carry* them the light, or *send* it to them.

42. The Salt of the Earth.

Here is something else which Christians are. *All* that they are cannot be told in a single sentence. It requires many. Some content themselves with a *partial* representation of the Christian character. But the proper plan is to bring together all the Bible has to say about it, and then aptly to arrange the parts so as to present a full and perfect delineation. Many seem to think that every definition of religion in the Bible is intended to exhaust the subject. It is a great mistake, and one which, I fear, is fatal to many.

Christians are the light of the world, as has been already said. But this is not all they are; they are also "the salt of the earth;" and the same individuals are both these; they do not merely *shine* for the benefit of the world; they act upon it in another, more immediate and more energetic manner; they are not merely light to it, but salt to it also. They *preserve* it.

Here let me remark, what a *useful* people Christians are! What are more useful, I may say indispensable, than light and salt? How could we get along at all without them? Well, Christians are *these* to the moral world. They enlighten it. They discover moral excellence to it. Yea, they preserve it from perishing. The world would not *keep* but for

Christians. They are the salt of the earth. How soon Sodom was destroyed after Lot left it! He was the salt of Sodom. That one good man saved the city while he remained in it; and if there had been nine more, they might all have remained, and Sodom should have been spared. Well may I say, how useful Christians are to their fellow-creatures! And I may add, how *variously* useful they are! If they were merely light to the world, they could be very useful; but they are also salt to it.

Moreover, what a *disinterested* people Christians are! It is not to themselves mainly that they are so useful, but to others. Not a man of them liveth to himself. Light shines not for its own advantage; and salt exists wholly for the benefit of other substances; and how completely it spends itself on them, and loses itself in them! Such are Christians. They please not themselves. They seek not their own. This is what we are, if we are Christians.

And now I have another grave reflection to make. How different Christians are from the residue of men! How *very* unlike them! *Others* are not the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. No, they are the world—the persons that require the light—the dark objects. They are the earth, which needs the salt for its preservation. They are the corrupt mass. Now, light is very unlike the objects it illumines, and salt very unlike the substance it preserves or seasons. If it were not, it would not

at all answer the purpose intended by its application. Well, just as unlike other men, unregenerate men, the men of the world, are Christians—as unlike as are light and the world, or salt and the earth. But some may say, this is *figurative* language. What if it is? Figures *mean* something. They mean as much as *literal* phraseology. And the meaning of figures is as easily gained as that of any other kind of language. But St. John speaks on this subject without a figure, and he employs one of the strongest and most striking expressions I have ever read. To many ears it does not sound at all charitable. He says, speaking in the name of Christians, "We know that *we* are *of God*, and the whole world lieth *in wickedness*;" or, to translate the original more literally, and to make the contrast still more striking, *in the wicked one*. This is his account of the difference between Christians and others. Christians are of God. All other men are in the wicked one. Nor is it wonderful that Christians are so very different from others, when we consider that they become such by being *created* anew in Christ Jesus. Such a work of God upon them must needs make them very unlike those who are not the subjects of it. Creation makes a vast difference in things. The first creation did. The second does also. The new creature differs widely from the mere creature. The Christian is eminently distinguished from the man.

Christians are exhorted not to be conformed to the

world. It would seem impossible that *real* Christians should be conformed to it. It would appear to be as contrary to their nature to be conformed to the world, as for light to resemble darkness, or salt any insipid or corrupt substance.

But the world say they do not see the mighty difference between Christians and other men. Perhaps it is because they do not look at the right persons. It is no wonder they do not see a mighty difference between some professors of religion and the rest of mankind, for no such difference exists. It is not to be seen. It is not every professor that is a true Christian. There are some that pass for Christians, of whom it may be said that the light which is in them is darkness. Such are not the lights of the world. They need themselves illumination more than any others, for the darkness which is in them is *great*. Again, there are those in whom, according to the case supposed by our Savior, the salt has lost its savor—its *saline* quality. Yes, there are *insipid* Christians. That such should not manifest the difference which exists between real Christians and others, is surely not to be wondered at. These differ from others rather in being worse than better than they. What is so worthless as salt which has lost its savor? "It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." Just so it is with graceless professors of religion. They serve no good turn, but many an ill one.

But some are not entirely without the *saline* principle; yet have it in great weakness. They are, if I may so speak, only a little *brackish* with it. Let such give diligence to grow in grace. And let us all see to it that we have salt in ourselves, that we may be in this respect also what Christ says his disciples are, "the salt of the earth."

---

43. The Distance of Death.

How far from any human being is death? This is not equivalent to asking when he will actually die. That may not be for years to come. But all that time how far off is death from him? Not far—only a step. "There is but *a step* between me and death." Death is always at just the same distance from every man, though all do not die at the same time, and some live to a much greater age than others. Death is as contiguous to childhood and youth, as it is to manhood and old age. Facts are every day proving it. From no subject of human life, and from no point or period of it, is death ever at a greater distance than may be measured by a step. *David* said what I have quoted, of himself. It is just as true of all men, unless some are protected, as Hezekiah was, by a promise of God that he should live a number of years.

David said it in a moment of panic. He might have said it in his calmest hour. It is no piece of extravagance. It is a sober reality. It is plain matter of fact, that all we who live, live at precisely this little distance from death, and no more. David said it in view of a particular danger. But there are a thousand dangers besetting every man, any one of which could justify the language. We sometimes *seem* to be nearer death than at other times; and we are actually sometimes nearer dying. Every hour brings us nearer dying, but not nearer death, for that is never but "*a step*" off. That is always close at our side—our companion through life. The whole course of life is in the closest proximity to death. We are not merely tending *towards* a brink, over which ultimately we are to plunge, but we are all the time traveling *on* that brink. We are not journeying towards a precipice which may be more or less distant from us, but our whole way winds along the frightful edge of the precipice. Our danger does not commence just before we actually die, but it attends us all the way of life. It is true, some escape it for a long time, but there is not a point in the path which has not been so dangerous as to prove fatal to some travelers.

It is this, if I mistake not, which makes our condition here so fearful—this perpetual insecurity—this ever-present and imminent peril. It is not the certainty of the fact in regard to death that is so very

appaling to the soul. It is the uncertainty of the time It is not that ultimately we *must* die, but that presently we *may*. It is the thought of being necessarily always so near that great evil—always immediately adjacent to the judgment—always close upon the confines of eternity, and always within a little of our everlasting abode—the journey from every point of our path so short—a single stage, a single step! Now here; anon there—this hour with men; the next with God—to-day only candidates for immortality; to-morrow its incumbents—to-day on trial for eternity; to-morrow tried, and the case decided irreversibly and forever—on earth to-day; to-morrow in heaven or in hell—nor yet the interval always so great as a day. I do not think the fearfulness of man's condition in view of these considerations is capable of being exaggerated. No language can overstate it. If the change awaiting us were gradually brought about, it would not be so fearful. If one by one the mysterious ligaments of life were sundered, and one by one the objects of earth faded from our view, and the novelties of eternity were slowly and separately unfolded to our vision; if the summons of death designated a distant day for our appearing at the bar of God, and our way thither was long and difficult, dying would not constitute so formidable a prospect as now it does. But the fact is, the change is as sudden as it is great. The familiar scenes of the one world all vanish at once, and

the unimagined realities of the other all at once burst on the beholder. The summons requires immediate attendance, and the way is but a step. There is no doubt about this. There are not two minds on the subject. Every one, when asked what his life is, answers in similar language, "It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away." No one contends for the power or right to boast of to-morrow. All see that the Son of man cometh at such an hour as men think not. The frequent sudden precipitation into the grave and the eternal world, of persons of all ages, and of every condition of body, evinces that between them and death there was but *a step*. And how should there be more between us and death? The reasons which determine God in the dispensations of life and death are perhaps more inscrutable than those which govern any other part of his conduct. There is no class of facts out of which it is so perfectly impossible to construct a theory, as those which relate to human mortality.

So then, death is but a step off, and we cannot move him farther from us. He will keep just at that distance, though he may long maintain it. He will be ever threatening us—his weapon ever uplifted and over us, though he cannot strike until the word is given him from another. Is it so? Is death but a step removed—so near as that? Then, if there be any thing in death which requires preparation, (and

is there not?) how important that from the earliest dawn of reason it should be made! so that we may be ever prepared for that which is ever so near—always in panoply to meet an enemy always at hand! How absurd to put off preparation for death, when one cannot put off death itself! Is the reader prepared to die? He has entertained less momentous questions than this. Is he in readiness to take the step which separates him from all that is final and formidable in death? Will he not seriously institute and faithfully prosecute this inquiry?

But if death is so near, there are other things even more formidable than death, which cannot be far off. *Judgment* is near, if death is. Yes, "The Judge standeth before the door." How near to every accountable being is the place and period of his final reckoning! To-morrow he may have to answer for the deeds of to-day; or to-day, of yesterday's. How many accounts are closed every day—how many cases decided daily at that court of ultimate adjudication! And are we so near the awful interview—the tremendous audit? And does it not affect us at all? Are we so well prepared for it, or so careless of being prepared for it?

Retribution ensues immediately on judgment. That also is but the distance of "a step." Now, if that retribution were temporal and mutable, the thought would be alarming. But it is eternal and irreversible. Ah, then, if these things be so, how

near to some is *perdition!* It is the verge of that dark and fathomless abyss on which they so securely tread. What a risk they run! The prize ought to be great which is sought at such a peril. So near to *hell!* What a position to occupy! But if the sinner will repent, and behold the Lamb of God, and yield his heart to the Lord, then he shall be as near to *heaven.* There shall be but a step between him and it. Some are as near as all that to heaven. It is not a day's journey there. It is but to take a step, and, follower of Jesus, thou art where no night is, and no sound of moaning is heard, and every tear is wiped away. So near to heaven! How frequent then and fond should be your thoughts of it! *All* so near! Then "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness!" How carefully and circumspectly ought they to walk whose path lies along such a brink!

And since the end of all our opportunities is as near as death, whatever our minds meditate, or our hands find to do, for our own souls, for the good of others, or for the glory of God, let us do it with our might.

---

44. Why so Loth to Die?

I find within me a strange reluctance to die? and I perceive in others indications of a similar unwill-

ingness. Indeed, it is rare to meet with one who does not participate in this general and great aversion to dying. Now I do not wonder that some are unwilling to die. Nature revolts at death. It is the object of her strongest antipathy. It is not strange, therefore, that mere *natural* men should be averse to it. Some have nothing to die for. How can it be expected that they should be willing to die? They have nothing beyond the grave to go to. Their possessions all lie on this side of it. They have their portion in this life—their good things here. Do you wonder they are reluctant to leave them? To such to die is loss. Death is not theirs, as it is the Christian's; but on the other hand, they are death's. Jesus is not precious to them. How should they be "willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord?" What Paul esteemed "far better" than life—dying in order to be with Christ—has for them no charm whatever.

But that the spiritual man, the disciple and friend of Jesus, the child and heir of God, should be so strongly averse to death, deserves to be considered strange. We might indeed expect that there should remain some of the reluctance of nature to death, even in the subjects of grace, for Christianity does not destroy nature; but that this reluctance should be so strong, and often so predominant, that grace should not create a desire for death stronger than nature's aversion to it, is what surprises us.

I am sure it ought not to be as it is. Certainly every Christian ought to be able to say with Paul, "having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." However averse to being "unclothed," he should yet be willing to be "clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." Life required an exercise of patience in the saints of old, which seems to have no existence now. *Job* says, "all the days of my appointed time will I *wait*, till my change come." *Then* Christian submission was exercised in *living*. *Now*, to be resigned to *death* is the desideratum. Grace had then to make its subjects willing to live. Now it has to make them willing to die.

How shall we account for this reluctance? What if nature in us be strong, is not grace stronger? Has it subdued our sins, calmed our agitations, allayed our fears, and can it not master this one aversion? Have we made experiment of what grace can do with the fear of death?

Is it because of the *pain* of dying that we shrink from it? But how know we that to die is so very painful? In half the cases of death at least, it does not appear to be so. How many sicknesses we are subject to, whose progress is attended with far more pain! How many surgical operations which men readily submit to, are beyond all doubt productive of more suffering!

Is this world so bright and beautiful that we are

loth to leave it on that account? But is not heaven fairer and brighter far? Here there is night; but there none. Here deformity alternates with beauty; but there all is loveliness. Here the alloy prevails; there, there is no mixture—all is pure. Can it be possible that earth has charms and attractions equal to those of heaven—this earth, which the curse has lighted on, comparable in point of beauty and loveliness to that heaven where God manifests himself, and which Jesus has gone to prepare as the fit habitation and eternal home of his redeemed? Is it conceivable? Even the saints who lived under a darker dispensation esteemed the heavenly a better country. Is it the *separations* which death makes, that render us so averse to die? True, it separates, but it *unites* also. It takes us, I know, *from* many we love, but it takes us *to* as many we love. Leave we a family behind? But do we not go to one larger, more harmonious, happier? Are we parted from friends by death? And are we not joined to friends by the same? If we lose a father, do we not find a better father; and if we leave a dear brother, do we not go to one who "is not ashamed to call us brethren?" More than half of some families have gone already to heaven. Why should we be so much more desirous of continuing with the part on earth, than of going to the portion in heaven? Do those you part from need your care and services more than those to whom you go? But is it not safe going, and leav-

ing them in charge of God? Is it not he now who cares for them, and watches over them, provides for them, and defends them? And will he not do it when you are dead and gone? Ah, the parent clings to life, and looks imploringly on death, when he thinks of his loved little ones! What will become of them he asks? What would become of them now, if they had only you to care for them? It is not your eye that keeps watch over them; nor your arm that is put underneath and round about them; nor your hand from whose opening palm their wants are supplied. It is God's. And what he does by you now, cannot he do without you? Cannot he find other agents and instruments when you are laid aside? Does he not say of the widows and fatherless children, "leave them to me?" And will he not be faithful to the trust which he solicits?

Do not children desire to see the face of their father? And are not we children of God? After so many years of daily converse and communion with him, and after receiving so many tokens of his paternal regard, should you not be willing to go now and see him face to face, whose unseen hand has led, sustained and supplied you hitherto? It is unnatural in us not to be willing to go to God. We readily go to those we love.

Has *home* no charm? What man is he, to whom it has not a charm? Who has been long absent from it, and does not languish with desire to reach it?

But where is home—thy father's house? It is not here. It is beyond the flood. Earth is not home. Heaven is home. Living is not being at home. Dying is going home. We must die to reach our father's house. And yet we are reluctant to die!

Do you dread the *way?* Do you tremble at the thought of the valley of the shadow of death? What, when you are sure of such company as that of Jesus? Will you fear with him at your side? Do not talk of the cold arms of death. Think rather of the warm embrace of Jesus. Does he not say he will come for you? "If I go.... I will come again, and receive you unto myself." Angels may minister to the saints on common occasions, but when a Christian dies, Jesus himself attends.

But death has a *sting*. You mean he *had* one. To those who believe in Jesus, no sting of death remains.

Fear you the *consequences* of dying? Does the thought of the presence into which you are to go appal you? But you have often been into that presence in prayer—you have appeared already before God on his mercy seat, and then you have wished the veil away. Why then so unwilling that death should withdraw it? Were you not gladdened by those transient glimpses of his glory which you saw? And dread you now the full and fixed gaze of his glory? Have you not often sighed for those brighter views, and those nearer and clearer discoveries which death will afford you?

Surely it cannot be the *judgment* you fear. What, when you are "accepted in the beloved!" If accepted in yourself, you should not fear. How much less, when accepted in him! If God would honor your own righteousness, had you a righteousness of your own, will he not much more honor Christ's righteousness, now become yours? What if you cannot answer for yourself! Cannot he answer for you? But who is the judge? Is it not Jesus, your advocate? Will your advocate condemn you? Are you afraid to meet your Savior? He that summons you to judgment, is the same that said "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." Would you live always? I know you would not. But you would live longer, perhaps you say, for the sake of being useful to others. But who knows that you may not be more useful in heaven? Who can say but your death may do more good than your life? Besides, if God can dispense with your services, should you not be willing to have them arrested?

Do you not desire to be freed from all sin? But know you not that only he "that is dead is freed from sin?" If you cannot be perfectly holy until you die, ought you to be so unwilling to die? Is your desire of perfect holiness sincere, while you are so averse to the condition of it?

45. Heaven's Attractions.

I have been thinking of the attractions of heaven—what there is in heaven to draw souls to it. I thought of *the place*. Heaven *has* place. Christ says to his disciples, "I go to prepare a *place* for you." It is a part of the consolation with which he comforts them, that heaven is a place, and not a mere state. What a place it must be! Selected out of all the locations of the universe—the chosen spot of space. We see, even on earth, places of great beauty, and we can conceive of spots far more delightful than any we see. But what comparison can these bear to heaven, where every thing exceeds whatever eye has seen or imagination conceived? The earthly paradise must have been a charming spot. But what that to the heavenly? What the paradise assigned to the first Adam, who was of the earth, earthy, compared with that purchased by the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven? It is a "purchased possession." The price it cost the purchaser every one knows. Now, having purchased it, he has gone to prepare it—to set it in order—to lay out his skill upon it. O what a place Jesus will make—has already made—heaven! The place should attract us.

Then I thought of the freedom of the place from the evils of earth. Not only what *is* in heaven, should attract us to it, but what is *not* there. And what is not there? There is no *night* there. Who

does not want to go where no night is? No night—no *natural* night—none of its darkness, its damps, its dreariness—and no *moral* night—no ignorance—no error—no misery—no sin. These all belong to the night; and there is no night in heaven. And why no night there? What shines there so perpetually? It is not any natural luminary. It is a *moral* radiance that lights up heaven. "The glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." No need have they there of other light. This shines every where and on all. All light is sweet, but no light is like this.

And not only no night there, but "no more *curse*." Christ redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them. And "no more *death*." The last enemy is overcome at last. Each, as he enters the place, shouts victoriously, "O death—O grave!" "Neither *sorrow*." It is *here*. O yes. It *is* here—around, within. We hear it; we see it; and at length we feel it. But it is not there. "Nor *crying*"—no expression of grief. "Neither shall there be any more *pain:* for the former things are passed away." And what becomes of *tears?* Are they left to dry up? Nay, God *wipes* them away. And this is a sure sign they will never return. What shall cause weeping, when he wipes away tears?

I have not said that there is no *sin* in heaven. I have not thought that necessary. If sin was there,

night would be there, and the curse, and death, and all the other evils—the train of sin. These are not there. Therefore sin is not. No, "we shall be *like* him; for we shall see him as he is."

What *is* there then, since these are not? *Day* is there—and there is the *blessing* that maketh rich—and there is *life*, immortality—and since no sorrow, *joy*—"fulness of joy—joy unspeakable"—and *smiles* where tears were—and there they *rest*, not from their labors only, but from cares, and doubts, and fears. And *glory* is there, an "exceeding and eternal weight."

Then I thought of the *society*. It is composed of the *Elite* of the Universe. The various orders of angels who kept their first estate—as humble as they are high—not ashamed of men. Why should they be, when the Lord of angels is not ashamed to call us brethren? The excellent of the earth also—all the *choice* spirits of every age and nation—the first man—the first martyr—the translated patriarch—the survivor of the deluge—the friend of God, and his juniors, Isaac and Israel—Moses, the lawgiver, and Joshua the leader of the host—the pious kings—the prophets—the evangelists and apostles, Paul, John—the martyrs—the reformers—the Puritan fathers—the missionaries, Swartz, Brainerd, Martyn—Carey and Morrison have just gone up; and the young brothers, who ascended from Sumatra—and another, connected with missions, *Wisner*, has been suddenly sent for to heaven.

Is that all? Where is he who used to lisp "father, mother,"—thy child? Passing out of your hands, passed he not into those of Jesus? Yes, you suffered him. If any other than Jesus had said, "Suffer them to come to me," you would have said, No. Death does not quench those recently struck sparks of intelligence. Jesus is not going to lose one of those little brilliants. All shall be in his crown.

Perhaps thou hast a brother, or a sister there; that should draw you towards heaven. Perhaps a *mother*—she whose eye wept while it watched over thee, until at length it grew dim, and closed. Took she not in her cold hand, thine, while yet her heart was warm, and said she not, "I am going to Jesus. Follow me there?" Perhaps one nearer, dearer than child, than brother, than mother—the nearest, dearest is there. Shall I say who? Christian female, thy husband. Christian father, the young mother of thy babes. *He* is not. *She* is not; for God took them. Has heaven no attractions?

Heaven is gaining in attractions every day. True, the principal attractions continue the same. But the lesser ones multiply. Some have attractions there now, which they had not but a few months ago. Earth is losing. How fast it has been losing of late! But earth's losses are heaven's gains. They who have left so many dwelling places of earth desolate, have gone to their Father's house in heaven. What if they shall not return to us? We shall go to them. That is better.

But the principal attractions I have not yet mentioned. There is our Father—our heavenly Father, whom we have so often addressed as such in prayer. He that nourished and brought us up, and has borne us on—he that has watched over us with an eye that never sleeps, and provided for us with a hand that never tires; and who can pity too. We have never seen our heavenly Father. But there he reveals himself. There he smiles; and the nations of the saved walk in the light of his countenance.

And there is he, to depart and be with whom Paul desired, as being "far better" than to live. There is his glorified humanity. If not having seen, we love him; and in him, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, what will be the love and the joy when "we shall see him as he is?" There is he.

Heaven *has* attractions—many, and strong—and yet who would think it? How few feel and obey the heavenly attraction! How much more powerfully earth acts upon us! How unwilling we are to leave it even for heaven!

---

46. The Heavenly Recognition.

The question is often asked, "Do you think we shall know each other in heaven?" Some are very

curious to be informed on this subject. It is a point they seem more anxious to know than some other more important points. I am afraid we shall not *all* know each other in heaven. I am afraid we shall not all be there to know and be known. Let us first try to get to heaven. It is more important that we should be there, than that we should know what other persons are there. Let us repent with a broken heart; and believe in Christ for a title to heaven; and "let us follow holiness" that we may be furnished with a fitness for heaven; and being ourselves "accepted in the Beloved," and sanctified through the Spirit, let us try to get as many others to heaven as we can; and let us leave the subject of mutual recognition in heaven for subsequent consideration. By the time we have done what I recommend, we shall be close upon the celestial confines—perhaps within heaven's limits * * * *

[The article is unfinished. The beloved author here laid down his pen; and instead of resuming it, was called, who can question, to realise the scenes he had been describing.]

THE END.

THOUGHTS

ON POPERY.

"To the law and to the testimony." Isa.

BY REV. WILLIAM NEVINS, D. D.

Late Pastor of a Church in Baltimore.

PUBLISHED BY THE

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,

150 NASSAU-STREET, NEW-YORK.

D. Fanshaw, Printer.

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1836, by Rufus L. Nevins, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Southern District of New-York.

Right of publishing transferred to American Tract Society.

CONTENTS.

No.		Page
1.	Sufficiency of the Bible as a Rule of Faith and Guide to Salvation,	7
2.	The Source of Heresies,	16
3.	Private Interpretation,	11
4.	Popery Unscriptural,	15
5.	Evil of believing too much,	18
6.	The Nine Commandments,	21
7.	Catholic hostility to the Bible,	25
8.	Something for the Rev. Mr. H.	30
9.	Distinction of Sins into Mortal and Venial,	33
10.	The Deadly Sins,	35
11.	A Religion without a Holy Spirit,	37
12.	Infallibility,	40
13.	The Keys,	44
14.	The Head of the Church,	47
15.	The power to forgive Sins,	51
16.	A Catholic Book reviewed,	56
17.	Review of the Catholic Book continued,	60
18.	The Pope an Idolater,	65
19.	Charles X. an Idolater,	69
20.	Idolatry near home,	73
21.	Praying to Saints,	76
22.	Specimens of Catholic Idolatry,	80
23.	More Specimens of Catholic Idolatry,	85
24.	Image Worship,	89
25.	Relics,	94
26.	Seven Sacraments,	100
27.	Transubstantiation,	103
28.	Half a Sacrament,	105
29.	Extreme Unction,	109

No.		Page.
30.	Doing Penance,	112
31.	The hardest Religion,	116
32.	More about Penance,	120
33.	A Fast-day Dinner,	122
34.	The Mass,	125
35.	More about the Mass,	130
36.	The Host,	136
37.	Priests,	140
38.	Celibacy of the Clergy,	144
39.	A Holier state than Matrimony,	146
40.	Auricular Confession,	148
41.	A Mistake Corrected	151
42.	Purgatory,	152
43.	More about Purgatory,	156
44.	A Strange Thing,	158
45.	Canonizing Saints,	161
46.	General La Fayette not at rest,	165
47.	Prayers for the Faithful Departed,	170
48.	An Improvement,	175
49.	The Duke of Brunswick's Fiftieth Reason,	178
50.	The Duke's Seventh Reason,	181
51.	The Duke's Eleventh Reason,	187
52.	Beauties of the Leopold Reports,	190
53.	Beauties of the Leopold Reports,	194
54.	Partiality of the Church of Rome,	196
55.	Supererogation,	200
56.	Convents,	204
57.	Mr. Berrington and Mrs. More,	207
58.	A new method of exciting Devotion,	212

The lamented author of the following articles had long mourned over the influence of Romanism, as essentially a *political* rather than a *religious* institution—attracting men by its splendid and imposing *exterior*, to the neglect of that *spirituality of heart*, without which no man can "see the kingdom of God." He had made repeated endeavors to engage what he considered abler pens in exposing its absurdities; and at length, as a means of reaching the greatest number of minds, commenced the insertion of brief miscellaneous articles bearing on the subject in a widely circulated weekly newspaper—the New-York Observer—using the signature M. S. the finals of his name. In familiarity of style, kindness and cheerfulness of manner, and plain common sense, they are adapted to secure the attention and carry conviction to the heart of the general reader; while their richness of thought and clearness and conclusiveness of argument will render them not less acceptable to mature and cultivated minds. Finding the reception they met, it was the design of the author to comply with requests from numerous sources entitled to his regard, by himself (when the series should have been somewhat further extended) embodying them in a volume; but the failure of his health and the early close of his valuable life prevented the fulfillment of that design. They are now given to the public in accordance with general suggestions of the author, but essentially in the form in which they at first appeared.

THOUGHTS ON POPERY.

1. The Sufficiency of the Bible as a Rule of Faith and Guide to Salvation.

This is the great matter in controversy between Protestants and Roman Catholics. *We* say the Bible is sufficient. *They* say that it is not. Now, suppose that Paul the apostle be permitted to decide between us. We are agreed to refer the matter to him. Can our opponents object to this reference? Let Paul then be consulted in the only way in which he can be, viz. through his acknowledged writings. It is agreed on all hands that he wrote the *second* epistle to Timothy. Well, in the *third* chapter of that epistle, and at the 15th verse, he writes to Timothy thus: "And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation." That the Greek is here correctly translated into English, any scholar may see.

Here then we have what Paul *wrote*, and I cannot believe that he would *write*, in a letter to Timothy, that the Holy Scriptures are capable of being known by a child, and able to make wise unto salvation, and then *say*, to be handed down by tradition, that they are so obscure and abstruse that one can make nothing out of them.

But what did Paul write to Timothy about the Holy

Scriptures? He reminds him that he had known them from a child, that is, he had been acquainted with them so far as to understand them from that early age. Now, either Timothy was a most extraordinary child, of which there is no proof, or else the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, and of the New, so far as the latter was written and recognized at the time, are intelligible to a child. I see not how this conclusion can in any way be evaded. If the child of Eunice could and did know them, why may not my child and your child, and any child of ordinary understanding? And what do we want more for a rule of faith, than a Bible which a child can understand? The Bible then cannot be insufficient as a rule of faith, through any want of *perspicuity* in it. That point is settled.

But Paul says something more to Timothy about these same Scriptures, "*which*," he says, "*are able to make thee wise unto salvation.*" Why, what is the matter with the man? He talks as if he had taken lessons of Luther. When did he live? They say that the Protestant religion is only three hundred years old, but here is a man who lived well nigh eighteen hundred years ago, that writes amazingly like a Protestant about the Holy Scriptures. He says (and I have just been looking at the Greek to see if it is so there, and I find that it is) they are *able* to make thee *wise unto salvation.* Now, who wishes to be wiser than that? and if they can make *one* thus wise, they can make any number equally wise. So then the Scriptures can be known by children, and can make wise to salvation those who know them. This is Paul's decision, and here should be an end of the controversy. If this prove not the sufficiency of the Bible as a rule of faith and

guide to salvation, I know not how any thing can be proved. I will tell you what I am determined to do the next time a Catholic opens his mouth to me about the insufficiency and obscurity of our rule of faith, I mean to take hold of the sword of the Spirit by this handle, 2 Tim. 3 : 15, and I mean to hold on to this weapon of heavenly temper, and to wield it manfully, until my opponent surrender or retreat. He cannot stand before it.

But before I close this, I must say, that if the Scriptures which existed when Paul wrote to Timothy were able to make wise unto salvation, how much more are they with what has been added to the canon since? And here, by the way, we have an answer to the question which the Catholic asks with such an air of triumph: "How, if this be your rule of faith, did Christians get along before the New Testament was written and received?" Very well; they had Scriptures enough to make them "wise unto salvation" as early as the time of Timothy; and they had, many years before that, all the Old Testament, and a part of the New. Now, with Moses and the prophets, and the Psalms, and Matthew's Gospel, and perhaps some others, together with a large number of divinely inspired men, I think they must have got along very comfortably.

One thing more I desire to say. It is this: that there is an advantage for understanding the Bible, which does not belong to any book whose author is not personally accessible. The advantage is, that we have daily and hourly opportunity to *consult the Author* of the Bible on the meaning of it. We can, at any moment we please, go and ask him to interpret to us any

difficult passage. We can lift off our eyes from the word of truth, when something occurs which we do not readily comprehend, and direct them to the throne of grace. And what encouragement we have to do this! *James* tells us, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." So then we have the Bible to inform and guide us, and we have constant opportunities of consulting its Author in regard to its meaning. Is it not enough? I, for one, am satisfied. I can dispense with the fathers, &c. &c

---

2. The Source of Heresies.

The Roman Catholics say it is the Bible. They trace all the errors and divisions which prevail, to the Scriptures as their fountain. Do they know whose book it is which they thus accuse? How dare they charge God with being "the Author of confusion?" But is the Bible to blame for heresies? Christ gives a very different account of the matter. He says, Matt. 22 : 29, to the Sadducees, "Ye do err, *not* knowing the Scriptures." He makes *ignorance of the Scriptures* the source of heresies. He does not agree with the priests.

It is very strange, if the reading of the Scriptures is the cause of heresies in religion, that the Bereans, who *searched* them *daily*, because they would not take on trust even what *Paul* said, (and I suspect they would

not have treated *Peter* any more civilly,) did not fall into any of these errors. It would seem to have had quite a contrary effect, for it is added, "*therefore* many of them believed." Acts, 17 : 11, 12. Whatever these Bereans were, it is clear that they were not good Catholics.

But after all it is not surprising that these noble Bereans did not fall into any fatal error by reason of reading the Scriptures, since Peter says of Paul's hardest parts, and most obscure passages, that they do nobody any harm, but such as are both "unlearned and unstable;" and that they do them no harm, except they *wrest* them, that is, do absolute violence to them. 2 Pet. 3 : 16.

---

3. Private Interpretation.

It is known to every body how strenuously the Catholics oppose the reading of the Bible, or rather, I should say, the reader exercising his mind on the Bible which he reads. He may *read* for himself, if he will only let the church *think* for him. He may have a New Testament, and he may turn to such a passage as John, 3 : 16, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," &c. or to that, Matt. 11 : 28, 30, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," &c. and he may read the words, but then he must not attempt to put a meaning upon them, though it be very difficult

to avoid attaching a sense to them, since they are quite as easy to be understood as they are to be read. But he must not do it. At his peril he must not. He is guilty of the crime of private interpretation, if he does. Before he pretends to understand those passages. he must inquire how the church has always interpreted them, and what the popes and general councils have thought about them, and how *all* the *fathers*, from Barnabas to Bernard, not one excepted, have understood them. Well, now, it strikes me as rather hard upon the poor sinner, that he should be made to go through this long and difficult process before he is permitted to admire the love of God in the gift of his Son, and before he can go to Jesus for rest. And somehow I cannot help suspecting that it is not necessary to take this *circuitous* course, and that it is not so very great a sin when one reads such passages, to understand them according to the obvious import of their terms.

But the Catholic asks, "Does not Peter condemn private interpretation?" And they point us to his 2d Epistle, 1 : 20. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." Now you must know that Catholics, though they have no great attachment to the Bible, are as glad as any people can be, when they can get hold of a passage of it, which seems to establish some tenet of theirs. And as only a very small portion of the Bible has even the *appearance* of favoring them, one may observe with what eagerness they seize upon, and with what tenacity they cling to the rare passages which seem to befriend their cause. Thus they do with this passage of Peter. They quote it with an air of triumph,

and exultingly ask what Protestants can have to reply to it.

Now, in the name of Protestants, I will state in two or three particulars what we have to say in opposition to the Catholic inference from these words of Peter. We say that that passage does not make for the Catholic cause, *first*, because if the right of private judgment and private interpretation is taken away by it, as they affirm, yet it is taken away with respect to only a small part of the Bible, viz. the *prophetic* part. He does not say that any other part, the historical, the didactic, or the hortatory, is of private interpretation, but only the prophetic, that part in which something is *foretold*. He does not say *no Scripture*, but "*no prophecy* of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." Allowing then to the Catholic all which he contends for, we are left with by far the larger part of the Bible open to private interpretation. Peter restricts us only in the matter of *prophecy!*

But *secondly*, let me say, that to whatever the remark of the apostle has reference, it can easily be shown that it does not mean what the Catholic understands it to mean. This is evident from what follows it. I wish the reader would turn to the passage. He will perceive that Peter, having said that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation, proceeds to assign the reason of that assertion, or rather, as I think, goes into a further and fuller explanation of what he had said: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, (that is, it was not of human invention, it did not express the conjectures of men,) but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Now I would ask if this reason

confirms the Catholic view of the passage? Is the fact that the Bible was written by men inspired of God to write it, any reason why it should not be of private interpretation? Does the circumstance that God gave them the thoughts, and even suggested to them the words in which they should clothe them, render the production so unintelligible, or so equivocal in its meaning, that a private individual cannot be trusted to read it? That would be to say that God cannot make himself understood as easily as men can! The Catholic argument from this passage may be stated thus: *the Bible is an inspired book, therefore too obscure and ambiguous to be of private interpretation! Inspired*, therefore *unintelligible!*

If it be so hard to understand what God says, how was the divine Savior able to make himself understood by the common people who heard him gladly? I suspect they knew what he meant when he said, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." The sermon on the mount seems to have been understood by those who heard it. No one thought of asking how others understood it. No one felt the necessity of an interpreter: every one exercised his private judgment on what Christ said. Now, suppose that what Jesus said to the people, and they found no difficulty in understanding it, had been taken down in writing at the time, would not they who understood it when they *heard* it, have equally understood it when they *read* it? The *spoken* discourses of Christ were intelligible: have they become unintelligible by being *written?*

To return for a moment to the passage in Peter. I consider that the word rendered in verse 20, *interpretation*, should be translated as Dr. M'Knight trans-

lates it, *invention;* or, as another renders it, *impulse:* and verse 21 should be considered as explanatory of that which precedes it. If the apostle really intended to deny the right of private judgment, why does he in verse 19 exhort all the saints, to whom he wrote, to *take heed* to "the more sure word of prophecy," the very thing in reference to which he is supposed to deny the right of private judgment? Why should they *take heed* to it, if it is not of private interpretation? and why does he speak of it as "a *light* that shineth in a dark place?"

Finally: If no part of Scripture is of private interpretation, then of course the passage of Scripture, 2 Pet. 1 : 20, is not of private interpretation; and yet the Catholic exercises his private judgment upon it, and submits it to the private judgment of the Protestant, in the hope thereby of making him a Catholic! No part of Scripture, according to him, may be privately interpreted, but that which affirms that *no part, not even itself,* may be privately interpreted!

---

4. Popery Unscriptural.

I undertake to prove that the Roman Catholic religion is *unscriptural*—that it is not borne out by the Bible. If I can do that, I shall be satisfied; for a religion, professing to be Christianity, which does not agree with the statements of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, *Peter*, James and Jude, will, I am per-

suaded, never go down in the United States of America. It may do for Spain, Portugal and Italy; but it will not do here. There is too much respect for the Bible in this republican land to admit of such a thing. Republicans know too well how much liberty owes to the Bible. They know that tyranny cannot exist where the Bible, God's *magna charta* to mankind, is in the hands of the people. Besides, the people of this country have too much good common sense to take that for Christianity about which the evangelists and the apostles knew nothing. I think, therefore, that I shall have gained the point, if I show that Romanism and the Bible are at odds. This, if I mistake not, I can easily do.

The Roman Catholics act very much as if they themselves did not regard their religion as being *scriptural*. Why, if they believe that their religion is the religion of the Bible, do they not put the Bible into the hands of the people, and advise them to read it, that they may become, or continue to be good Roman Catholics? Why not circulate far and wide the book which contains their religion? They need not take our translation of it. They have one of their own—the Douay. Let them circulate that. Why do they leave the whole business of distributing the Scriptures to the Protestants? Above all, why do they oppose the operations of Bible Societies, when they are only multiplying and diffusing copies of the book which contains the Roman Catholic religion?

I am particularly surprised that the Roman Catholics are not more anxious to put into general circulation the two epistles of *their* St. Peter, who they assert was the first Bishop of Rome, and earliest Pope. They ac

knowledge that he wrote two epistles, and that they are extant. Why, in the name of common sense, do they not let every Catholic have them! I do not wonder that they wish to keep out of sight of the people the epistles of Paul, who says, Gal. 2 : 11, that he withstood Peter to the face, "because he was to be blamed." Paul forgot at the moment that Peter was supreme and infallible! We are all liable to forget. But why the rulers of the church should be unwilling to let the people hear Peter, is the wonder with me. I have been reading his epistles, to see if I can discover why the Catholics are not friendly to their circulation. Perhaps it is because in them he says nothing about *Rome*, unless by *Babylon*, 1 Ep. 5 : 13, he means Rome, as John does in the Revelation; and never a word about his being Bishop of Rome, or Pope! The man seems to have no idea that he was a pope. He says in his 1st Epistle, 5 : 1, "The elders which are among you I exhort, *who am also an elder*." An elder! was that all? Why, Peter, do you forget yourself? Do you not know that you are *universal Bishop, Primate of the Apostolical College, Supreme and Infallible Head of the Church?* He seems never to have known one word about it. Now I think I have hit upon one reason why it is thought best that the people in general should not be familiar with the writings of Peter.

I wish, for my part, that the Catholics would print an edition of Peter's Epistles, and give them general circulation among their members; for if the religion of these epistles is their religion I have no further controversy with them.

5. The Evil of Believing Too Much.

It is a common saying among the Catholics, that it is better to believe too much than to believe too little; and it is one of the arguments with which they endeavor to make proselytes, that they believe all that Protestants believe, besides a good deal that Protestants do not believe. Hence they would have it inferred that their religion possesses all the advantages which belong to Protestantism, and some more into the bargain; so that if the religion of the Reformation is safe, *much more* is that of the church of Rome safe. Now, as I am certain that this way of *talking* (*reasoning* it is not worthy to be called) has some influence in making Catholics, I shall take the liberty of examining it.

Why is it better to believe too much than to believe too little? *Excess* in other things is not better than *defect*. To *eat* or *drink* too much is not better than to eat or drink too little. To believe that two and two make five, is as bad as to believe that two and two make three. One of these errors will derange a man's calculations as much as the other. The man who believes that two and two make five, has no advantage because he believes the whole truth and a little more.

A certain writer, who ought to be in high authority at Rome as well as every where else, represents additions to the truth to be as injurious and as offensive to God as subtraction from it. Rev. 22 : 18, 19. "If any man shall *add* unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." Here you see what a man gets by believing too much. It is not altogether so safe a thing as the Catholics repre-

sent it to be. Adding is as bad as taking away. For every article added there is *a plague* added.

I suppose that one reason why these additions to the truth are so offensive to God is, that they are such additions as *take from* that to which they are added; just as when a man puts "a piece of new cloth into an old garment, that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse." Mat. 9 : 16. All the additions of the church of Rome to Christianity take away from some of its doctrines. She first cuts a hole in the robe of Christ and then applies her patch! In order to make room for her doctrine of human merit, she has to take away just so much from the merit of Christ. The Protestant doctrine is, that we are justified by faith alone, without the deeds of the law. Nay, says the Catholic, our own good works have something to do in the matter of our justification. Now, this addition does not leave entire that to which it is added, but takes from it!

We hold to the *perfection* of the one sacrifice offered by Christ on the cross. The Catholics add to this the sacrifice of the mass. They are not satisfied with Christ's being "*once* offered to bear the sins of many," but they teach the strange doctrine that Christ is offered as often as a priest is pleased to say mass!

Nothing is farther from the truth than that the Catholic believes all which the Protestant believes, besides a great deal that the Protestant does not believe. The latter part of the assertion is correct. The Catholics believe a great deal which the Protestants do not. In the *quantity* of their faith they far surpass us. There is the whole that is comprehended in *tradition*. They believe every word of it—while Protestants are

satisfied with Holy Scripture. But the Catholics do not believe all that Protestants believe; they do not believe the Protestant doctrine of regeneration, or justification, or other cardinal doctrines.

But, asks one, is not all that Protestants believe contained in the Scriptures! Yes. Well, Catholics believe the Scriptures. Therefore they believe all which Protestants do; and then, moreover, they believe tradition; so that they believe all which Protestants believe, and some more besides. Very logical, to be sure! But suppose that tradition and Scripture happen to contradict each other, how then? What sort of an addition to a testimony is a contradiction of it? I might give some precious specimens of these contradictions. The Catholic believes with Scripture, that "marriage is *honorable* in all;" and he believes with tradition, that it is *very disgraceful* in some. One of his rules of faith affirms that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," but the other assures him that there is merit in his good works. One says that Peter was *to be blamed*, but the other asserts his infallibility. According to one, Peter was a simple *elder;* but according to the other, universal bishop, &c. The Catholic says he believes both, and therefore he is in a safer state than the Protestant. Well, when I can be convinced that two contradictory assertions are both true, I may believe as much as the Catholic believes. Meanwhile I am satisfied with believing *enough;* and not caring to be more than perfectly safe, I shall continue to be a Protestant.

6. The Nine Commandments.

"*Nine* commandments! What does that mean? I always thought the commandments were *ten*." There used to be that number. There were ten proclaimed by the voice of God from Mount Sinai; and ten were written by the finger of God on the tables of stone, and when the tables were renewed, there were still ten: and the Jews, the keepers of the Old Testament Scriptures, always recognized ten; and so did the primitive church, and so do all Protestants in their creeds and catechisms. But the Roman Catholics, (you know they can take liberties, for they are the true church, they are infallible. A person, and so a church, which cannot possibly make a mistake, need not be very particular about what it does,) these Christians who have their head away off at Rome, subtract one from the ten commandments; and you know if you take one from ten, only nine remain. So they have but nine commandments. Theirs is not a Decalogue, but a Nonalogue.

It is just so. When, many years ago, I first heard of it, I thought it was a slander of the Protestants. I said, "O, it cannot be that they have dared to meddle with God's ten commandments, and leave out one. They cannot have been guilty of such impiety. Why, it is just as if some impious Israelite had gone into the holy of holies, opened the ark of the covenant, and taking out the tables of stone, had, with some instrument of iron, obliterated one of the commands which the divine finger wrote on them." But then it struck me how improbable it was that such a story should

ever have gained currency, unless there was some foundation for it. Who would ever have thought of charging Roman Catholics with suppressing one of the commandments, unless they had done it, or something like it?

So I thought I would inquire whether it was so or not; and I did, and found it to be a fact, and no slander. I saw with my own eyes the catechisms published under the sanction of bishops and archbishops, in which one of the commandments was omitted; and the reader may see the same thing in "The Manual of Catholic Piety," printed no farther off than in Philadelphia. The list of the commandments runs thus:

1. I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange Gods before me.

2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

3. Remember the Sabbath day, &c.

The reader will see that the commandment which the Catholics leave out, as being grievous to them, is the second in the series. It is the one that forbids making graven images and likenesses of any thing for worship. That is the one they don't like; and they don't like it, because they do like pictures and images in their churches. They say these things wonderfully tend to promote devotion, and so they do away that commandment of God! David says, "I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right." But he was no Catholic.

Well, having got rid of the second, they call the third second, and our fourth they number third, and so on till they come to our tenth, which, according to their numbering, is the ninth. But as they don't like

the sound of "the nine commandments," since the Bible speaks of "the ten commandments," Exod. 34: 28; Deut. 4: 13, and every body has got used to the number ten, they must contrive to make out ten some how or other. And how do you think they do it? Why, they halve their ninth, and call the first part ninth, and the other tenth.

So they make out ten. In the Philadelphia Manual, corrected and approved by the Right Rev. Bishop Kenrick, it is put down thus: "9th. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife. 10th. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods." You see they make two of the commandments to relate to coveting. It is not very probable the Lord did so. I reckon they were not so numbered on the tables of stone. But you see it would never do to let that second commandment stand, and it would never do to have less than ten: so they were laid under a sort of necessity to do as they have done. But, after all, it is a bad job. It is not near so ingenious as many of the devices of Popery. After all is said and done, they have but nine commandments; for every body knows that by dividing any thing you get not two wholes, but two halves: there is but one whole after the division. And so the ninth commandment is but one commandment after they have divided it. If they were to quarter it they could not make any more of it. If the Catholics are bent on dividing the last of the commandments, they should call the first half, 8½, and the second half, 9th. That is what they ought to do. That would be acting honestly, for they know they have left out one of the Lord's ten. They know that the Lord gave ten commandments, and they acknowledge only nine of them. It

is a mean device to divide one of the nine, and then say they acknowledge ten. The Catholics know that the commandments, as they are in many of their catechisms, are not as they were written with the finger of God on the tables of stone. They know that one is wanting, and why it is they know. They had better take care how they do such things, for the Lord is a jealous God.

Indeed the Catholics are sorry for what they have done in this matter. It has turned out a bad speculation. This reduction of the law of God one-tenth, has led to the opening of many eyes. They would never do the like again. And as a proof of their repentance, they have restored the second commandment in many cases: they can show you a great many catechisms and books in which it is found. I had supposed that the omission existed now only in the catechisms published and used in Ireland, until I heard of the Philadelphia Manual. They had better repent thoroughly, and restore the commandment in all their publications. And I think it would not be amiss for them to confess that for once they have been fallible; that in the matter of mutilating the Decalogue, they could, and did err. If they will afford us that evidence of repentance, we will forgive them, and we will say no more about it. We know it is a sore subject with them; they don't know how to get along with it. When one asks them, "How came you to leave out the second commandment?" if they say, "Why, we have not left it out of all our books." The other replies, "But why did you leave it out of any?" and there the conversation ends. Echo is the only respondent, and she but repeats the question, "Why?"

7. Catholic Hostility to the Bible.

I am not surprised that the Roman Catholics dislike the Bible, for very much the same reason that Ahab, king of Israel, disliked Micaiah, the prophet of the Lord. 1 Kings, 22 : 8. It is hard not to contract a strong dislike to that which is for ever bearing testimony against one. To love an enemy is one of the most difficult attainments. Now, the Bible is all the time speaking against the Catholic religion, and prophesying not good, but evil of it, just as Micaiah did of Ahab. It is natural, therefore, that the Catholic should feel an aversion to the Bible. We ought not to expect any thing else. But I am somewhat surprised that they do not take more pains to conceal their dislike of it, for it certainly does not look well that the church of God should fall out with the oracles of God. It has an ugly appearance, to say the least, to see the Christian church come out against the Christian Scriptures.

I wondered much, when, a few years ago, the Pope issued his encyclical letter, forbidding the use of the Bible in the vulgar tongue. It certainly looks bad that Christ should say, "Search the Scriptures;" and that the vicar of Christ should say, "No, you shall not even *have* them." It has very much the appearance of contradicting Christ: but appearances may deceive in this case, as in transubstantiation. But I must do the Pope justice. He does not unconditionally forbid the use of the Bible, but only the use of it in the *vulgar* tongue. The Pope has no objection that a person should have the Bible, provided he has it in a language which he does not understand. The English Catholic may have

a French Bible, and the devout Frenchman may make use of an English or Dutch Bible; or both may have a Latin Bible, provided they have not studied Latin. An acquaintance with the Latin makes it as vulgar a tongue as any other. I have thought it due to the Pope to say thus much in his favor. Far be it from him to forbid the use of the Bible, except in the vulgar tongue!

Another more recent fact has surprised me not a little—that a student of Maynooth College, Ireland, named O'Beirne, should have been expelled that institution for persisting in reading the Bible! Expulsion is a pretty serious thing. That must be esteemed a heinous crime which is supposed to justify so severe a penalty. I cannot see any thing so criminal in reading the Scriptures. I wonder if the reading of any other book is forbidden at Maynooth: I suspect not. The authorities at Maynooth must think the Bible the *worst* book in the world. A student of that college may read whatever is most offensive to purity and piety in the ancient classics, without any danger of expulsion; but if he reads the Bible he is dismissed with dishonor! But I suppose they will say, he was not expelled for reading the Scriptures, but for contempt of authority, in that, after being forbidden to read the Scriptures, he still persisted in reading them. That makes a difference I must confess: still the young man's case was a hard one. Christ told him not only to read, but to *search* the Scriptures: the authorities of the college told him he must not. His sin consisted in obeying Christ rather than the government of the college. I think it might have been set down as *venial.* They might have overlooked the fault of preferring Christ's authority to theirs. "When the

Son of man shall come in his glory," I don't believe he will *expel* the young man for what he did, though the college bade him "depart."

I wonder, and have always wondered, that the Catholics, in prohibiting the Scriptures, do not except St. Peter's Epistles. Was ever any Catholic forbidden to read the letters of a Pope? I believe not. But if good Catholics may, and should read the "Encyclical Letters" of the Popes, why not let them read the "General Epistles" of the first of Popes, Peter? Why is it any more criminal to read the letters of Pope Peter, than those of Pope Gregory? I cannot explain this.

Here is another fact that has surprised me. A recent Galway newspaper denounces, by name, two Protestant clergymen as *reptiles*, and advises that they should be at once trampled on. What for? Why, for the sin of holding a Bible meeting, and distributing the Scriptures! It speaks of them as a hell-inspired junto of incarnate fiends, and says, "If the devil himself came upon earth, he would assume no other garb than that of one of these biblicals." The Irish editor adds, "The biblical junto must be put down in Galway." He is evidently in a passion with the Bible: I suppose it must be because it prophecies no good of him. Certainly he cannot think the Bible very favorable to his religion, otherwise he would not proclaim such a crusade against its distribution. It is the first time I ever heard it asserted, that the managers and members of Bible Societies are *ipso facto* incarnate fiends. It seems singular, that those who promote the circulation of a *heaven-inspired* volume, should be themselves, as a matter of course, *hell-inspired.* I cannot think that Exeter Hall and Chatham-street Chapel become

Pandemoniums whenever the Bible Society meets in them. Nor shall I believe that Satan is going to turn Bible distributer, until I actually see him "walking about" on this agency.

I do not know how it is, but I cannot help looking on the circulation of the Scriptures as a benevolent business—the gratuitous giving of the word of God to the children of men as a good work. When recently I read an article stating that the Young Men's New-York Bible Society had undertaken to supply the emigrants arriving at that port with the Bible in their respective languages, I almost instinctively pronounced it a good work; and I was astonished, as well as grieved, to find that some of the emigrants refused to receive the volume. I suppose that if the agent had offered them a volume of the Spectator, or a novel, they would have taken that. Any book of man they could have thankfully received; but the book of God they had been instructed to refuse, should that be offered them! The agent reports the following fact: "June 17, visited on their landing a large number of emigrants from Ireland, not one of whom could be prevailed on to receive a Bible, even as a gift. One of the females told me, if I would give her one she would take it with her and burn it." Who, do you suppose, put them up to refuse the Bible? And who put it into the head of the woman to speak of *burning* the Bible? I think any person, in whatever part of the country born, could *guess*. I guess it was not any infidel—I guess it was a priest.

But perhaps the reason they refused the Bibles offered them, was, that they had other and better Bibles. That is not pretended. They had none. Now, it seems

to me they might have accepted our Bibles until they could procure their own better Bibles. An imperfectly translated Bible is better than none: no translation of the Bible was ever so bad as to be worse than no Bible. What if the Douay is before all other Bibles, yet king James' may answer one's turn until he can get the Douay. The Catholics complain that we give their people an erroneously translated Bible: why, then, do they not supply them with a correct translation? When they undertake that, we will cease to trouble them. We would be very glad to see every Catholic family possessing, and capable of reading, the Douay Bible, although it does make repentance towards God to consist in doing penance appointed by men. But that they have no idea of doing. Does not the Pope forbid the use of the Bible in the vulgar tongue! I know many Catholics have it, but it is no part of their religion to have a Bible. They get their Christianity without the trouble of *searching* the Scriptures. Indeed they would in vain search in the Scriptures for what they call Christianity. If they were not perfectly conscious that their religion is not to be found in the Bible, do you suppose they would denounce and persecute that book as they do? Would they direct their inquiries to fathers, and councils, and priests for information, rather than to prophets, evangelists, and apostles?

8. Something for the Rev. Mr. H.

Mr. H. the Goliath of the Catholics, seems to be very fond of asking questions which he thinks nobody can answer. I am not acquainted with any writer who makes more frequent use of the interrogation point. But his questions are not quite so unanswerable as he supposes. I will just answer *two* of the string of questions with which he commences a recent letter to Mr. B. and then I beg leave to ask a few.

He wants to know *first*, what the Protestant religion is. He has been often told, but I will tell him again. *It is the religion of the Bible.* It was not called *Protestant* when the Bible was written, for then there was no corruption of Christianity to *protest* against. But it is the same, however called. There it is, *in the Bible.* Read it. Read any part of it. You cannot go amiss to find *the religion of the Reformation* in the Bible. Read particularly the epistle to the Romans, to whom Catholics pretend to refer their origin; or the epistle to the Ephesians. I wonder if a passage from either of these prominent epistles was ever quoted by any one in proof of any peculiarity of the Roman Catholic church! I suspect never. Protestants, however, make great use of them.

But, says the interrogator, "tell us what particular doctrines constitute the Protestant religion. Telling us it is the religion of the Bible, is telling us *where* it is, but not *what* it is." And is it not enough to tell you *where* you may find a thing? Have you no *eyes?* Have you no *mind?* Do you want one to *think* for you? Is not that all which Jesus Christ did? He gave

the Scriptures to the Jews, and said, "search them." So we put the Bible into your hand, and say, *there is our religion.* And yet you ask, "Where was your religion before Luther?" Before Luther! we tell you where it was before *the earliest fathers.* It was in the Gospels and Epistles, where it is now, and ever will be. What have we to do with Luther or Augustine, or any of them, until we get as far back into antiquity as St. John?

But Mr. H. asks again, "What society of Christians ever taught this pretended religion of Christ previous to the Reformation?" Why, Mr. H. do not affect such ignorance—you must be *joking*, when you ask such a question. Did you never hear of a society of Christians residing at Rome, some of whom were of Cæsar's household, to whom one Paul wrote a letter, which has come down to us? Now, if it cannot be ascertained what that society of Christians "taught," yet it can easily be ascertained what *was taught* them. It is only to read the letter. And I think it not improbable that that society of Christians professed and taught what St. Paul taught them.

But there was another respectable society of Christians, a good while "previous to the Reformation," who seem to have known something about this "pretended religion of Christ," called Protestant. They dwelt in a city named Ephesus. That same Paul resided among them three years, preaching the Gospel, and he did it *faithfully.* He "shunned not to declare all the counsel of God." After establishing a flourishing church there, he went away, and subsequently addressed an epistle to them, which also has come down to us. In this epistle it is to be presumed

that he embodied the substance of the Gospel, which he had taught them "publicly and from house to house." He is not to be suspected of *preaching* one thing and *writing* another. Will Mr. H. deny that the society of Christians at Ephesus professed and taught the doctrines of the epistle to the Ephesians? I think not. Well, sir, what are the doctrines of that epistle? Are they yours or ours—Catholic or Protestant? I will leave it to any intelligent infidel on earth to decide. Will Mr. H. agree to the reference? O no, he wants us to leave it to a pope, and general council, and the *unanimous fathers.*

I have told Mr. H. now of *two* societies of Christians who "taught this pretended religion of Christ previous to the Reformation." I could tell of more; but two are enough. He only asked for *one.*

Now I would ask Mr. H. a question. Where was your religion, Mr. H. at the time the Bible was written? I am curious to know. How came the evangelists and apostles to know nothing about it, if it is really the religion of Christ? Perhaps Mr. H. can clear up this difficulty. I wish he would, if he can. I do not want him to say where his religion was *after* the Bible was written, and *after* all the evangelists and apostles were dead. I am informed on that point. I want to know where the Roman Catholic religion was *before* those good men died; where it was *before the fathers.*

They talk about the *antiquity* of the Roman Catholic religion. It is *old*, I must confess. It bears many marks of age upon it. But the difficulty is, it is *not old enough* by a century or two at least. They say it is the *first* form of Christianity. That is a

mistake. It is the *second.* The first appeared for a while, then "fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God," and re-appeared at the Reformation. They call it a *new* religion. But no, it is *the old restored.* If any one doubts the *identity* of the *restored* religion, let him but compare its features with that which appeared and flourished in the apostolic age.

Another question I beg leave to ask Mr. H. "Did the first Christians of Rome hold the doctrines contained in the epistle to the Romans, or did they not?" If they did not, they must have departed from the faith sooner than Paul predicted that they would. If they did hold the doctrines of the epistle, then, since these are the very doctrines which the friends of the Reformation contend for, have we not here the example of a society holding the doctrines of the Reformation long before the actual era of the Reformation? I have other questions to ask, but I wait for these to be answered.

---

9. The Distinction of Sins into Mortal and Venial.

Mr. Editor,—I was not aware, until recently, that Roman Catholics of this age, and in this country, make that practical use which I find they do of the distinction of sins into *mortal* and *venial.* For the truth of the following narrative I can vouch. An intelligent gentleman being, a few weeks since, expostulated with by a Protestant lady, on his spending the whole of a certain Sabbath in playing cards, replied with

the utmost readiness, and with every appearance of confidence in the validity of his apology, "O, that is not a *mortal* sin." Several similar examples of a resort to this distinction were reported to me. Now, can that system be the religion of Jesus Christ, which recognizes this horrible distinction, and puts such a plea as this into the mouth of a transgressor of one of the commandments of that Decalogue which God's own voice articulated and his own finger wrote? I cannot express the feelings I have, when I think of the multitudes who are forming a character for eternity under the influence of doctrines like these. What sort of a character must they form!

How completely at variance with the Scriptures is this distinction! "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them—the wages of sin is death—the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Gal. 3 : 10; Rom. 6 : 23; Ezek. 18 : 4. Is not all sin disobedience to God? and may he be disobeyed in any respect without guilt? Did ever a father of a family recognize such a distinction in the government of his children? Did Christ atone for what are called venial sins, or did he not? If he did not, then he did not atone for all sin. If he did atone for them, they must be worthy of death, since he died for them.

The truth is, all sin is mortal, if not repented of, and all sin is venial, that is, pardonable, if repented of. There is no sin which the blood of Christ cannot cleanse from. And nothing but *that* can take out any sin.

It is not worth while to reason against such a distinction. I only mention it as one of the absurd and pernicious errors of the system to which it belongs.

10. The Deadly Sins.

In "the Christian's Guide to Heaven" I read with some interest an enumeration of what the Catholics are pleased to call "the seven deadly sins." Why this distinction, thought I? Are there only seven sins? Or are only *some* sins deadly; and is the number of sins that kill ascertained by the infallible church to be just seven and no more, all other sins being *venial*, not *mortal*, according to another distinction which that church presumes to make?

They cannot mean that there are only seven sins, for *heresy* is not in this list of sins, and that I am sure they esteem a sin; neither is there any mention of *falsehood* and *deception*, which we Protestants regard as sins, even though their object should be *pious*. Besides, David says that his iniquities were more than the hairs of his head—consequently many more than seven. And who is any better off than David in this respect? Moreover, even the Catholics admit *nine* commandments. They do not leave out any but the *second*. They must therefore admit the possibility of at least nine sins.

They must mean that there are only seven sins which are mortal to the soul. But if this be the case, why is it said, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all things* written in the book of the law to do them?" It is admitted that there are more than seven things written in the book of the law. Again, why is it said that the wages of *sin* is death? This would seem to imply that death is due to every sin, of whatever kind. If there are only seven deadly sins, why

does not the apostle say, "The wages of these seven sins (enumerating them) is death?" But he does not say that. He regarded all sins as deadly—every one of the multitude as mortal in its consequences.

If there are only seven sins which are deadly, then I suppose we can answer for all the rest; but *Job* says he cannot answer him *one of a thousand*. According to Job, then, who is a very ancient authority, there are at least a thousand sins for which we cannot answer.

But let us hear what the seven are. They are *Pride*, *Covetousness*, *Luxury* or *Lust*, *Anger*, *Gluttony*, *Envy*, *Sloth*. Well, these are, to be sure, sins, all but one of them, *anger*, which is not necessarily a sin any more than grief is. We are directed to "be angry and sin not." I wonder they should have put anger without any qualification among the seven deadly sins. It must be because they are not familiar with the Scriptures. But granting them all to be sins, then certainly they are deadly, since all sin is deadly. We could not therefore object, if it had been said, in reference to them, "seven deadly sins." But "*the* seven deadly sins" seems to imply that there are no more. We read in the book of Proverbs of *six* things which the Lord doth hate; yea, of seven that are an abomination to him. But there is no implication there, that those are the only things which the Lord hates. It is not said, "*the seven* things which the Lord doth hate." The language which I animadvert upon implies that the seven sins enumerated are, if not exclusively, yet peculiarly deadly. Now that is not the case. There is nothing in those sins to entitle them to this distinction above other sins. There is no reason why we should be warned to avoid them more than many others.

I am surprised that in the list of deadly sins there is no mention of *unbelief*. Now surely that must be a deadly sin, when "he that believeth not shall be damned—shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Moreover, we are told that the Holy Ghost came primarily to reprove the world of unbelief—and yet there is no recognition of it among the deadly sins! It is an oversight, which no wonder they fell into, who, in making out their religion, made no use of the word of God.

I perceive that neither *heresy* nor *schism* are in the list of deadly sins. I infer, then, that to differ from the Roman church in some particulars, and even to separate from her communion, is not fatal, even she herself being judge. I thank her for the admission.

There is one sin which, in all their catalogues, the Catholics omit, and which, I think, they need to be reminded of. It is the sin of *idolatry*—of worshiping the creature—of paying divine honors to something else besides God. It used to be very deadly, under the Jewish dispensation. It doubtless is equally so under the Christian. They had better beware of it. They had better leave off praying to saints, and honoring the Virgin Mary above her Son, lest perchance they fall into deadly sin.

---

11. A Religion without a Holy Spirit.

A gentleman of intelligence, who was born of Catholic parents, and educated in the Catholic church,

but left it recently for Protestantism (for some do leave the Catholic for the Protestant church—the conversions are not all *to* Romanism—but we, Protestants, don't make such a noise about it when we receive a convert; and I suppose the reason is, that it is really no wonder that a Catholic should become a Protestant—the only wonder is, that any should remain Catholics)—this gentleman said to his brother, who is still a Catholic, "Why, brother, as long as I was a Catholic, I never knew that there was a Holy Spirit."

And what do you think was the brother's reply? "Well, I don't know that there is one now!"

The narration of what passed between these two men struck me with great force. A religion without a Holy Spirit! and this the religion, according to the computation of Bishop England, of *two hundred millions* of mankind! It made me sorry. My religion, thought I, would be very imperfect without a Holy Spirit. I want a Sanctifier, as well as a Surety. I want one to act internally *upon* me, as well as one to act externally *for* me. What should I do with my *title* to heaven, without a *fitness* for it? As a sinner, I am equally destitute of both. There can be no heaven without holiness. And whence has any man holiness but from the Holy Spirit? And is it likely he will act where he is not acknowledged? If priests can *pardon*, as they say, yet can they *purify*?

Here were two men, educated in the Catholic religion, and attending weekly the Catholic church, and yet never having heard of the Holy Spirit! They had heard often enough of the Virgin Mary, and of this saint, and that saint, but never a word of the Holy

Spirit, the Divine Sanctifier! But was it not their own fault? Is not the doctrine of the Trinity a part of the Catholic faith? It is—but that may be, and yet the priests never instruct the people in the character and office of the Holy Spirit, and in the necessity of his operations.

But had these men never been present at a baptism, when *water*, according to Christ's direction, with *oil*, *spittle*, &c. as the church directs, is applied to the body, and the name of each person of the Trinity is mentioned? Yes, but, poor men, they had never studied *Latin*. How should they know what *Spiritus Sanctus* means, when they hear it? Why should all the world be presumed to understand *Latin*? Oh, why should the worship of the living God be conducted in a *dead* language? But this is by the way.

These men knew not that there was a Holy Spirit—why did they not know it? I will tell you. Because so little is said of the Holy Spirit among the Catholics—there is so little need of any such agent, according to their system! They do not believe in the necessity of a change of heart. Why should there be a Holy Spirit? The priest does not want any such help to prepare a soul for heaven. *The Catholic system is complete without a Holy Spirit.* Therefore nothing is said of him in the pulpit, and in the confession-box; and the sinner is not directed to seek his influences, or to rely on his aid. If I misrepresent, let it be shown, and I will retract. But if I am correct in the statement I make, look at it. Protestant, look at it.....a religion without a Holy Spirit! Catholic, look at it, and obey the voice from heaven which says. "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers

of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." This is one of her *capital* crimes. She does not speak *against* the Holy Ghost. No she is *silent* about him!

---

12. Infallibility.

Every body knows that the Church of Rome lays claim to infallibility. She contends that there is *no mistake* about her; that she *cannot* err. Now this very *modest* claim of our sister of Rome (for in the matter of churches I reject the relation of mother and daughter) I am constrained to question, and that for such reasons as the following:

1. She cannot herself tell us where her infallibility is to be found. She is sure that she has it somewhere about her, but for the life of her she cannot tell where. Some of her writers say that it is with the Pope. Others contend that it resides in a general council. And another opinion is that both the Pope and a council are necessary to it. Now I think they ought to settle it among themselves *who* is infallible, before they require us to believe that *any one* is. Let them *find* infallibility and *fix* it. After that it will be time enough for us to admit its existence. But,

2. We will suppose that it is the Pope who is infallible—each successive Pope. Well, where did they get their infallibility? Why, it was transmitted from St. Peter, to be sure. Christ gave it to him, and he

handed it down. But was Peter infallible? There was a day when I suspect he did not think himself infallible—when smitten to the heart by the reproving look of his Lord, he went out and wept bitterly. There is no doubt that he made a *mistake*, when he so confidently pronounced, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee"—and let it be remembered that this was after Christ had said, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock," &c.

If Peter was infallible, I wonder he did not at once settle the difficulty of which we have an account in Acts, 15. Why was the matter suffered to be debated in the presence of his infallibility? It seems that Peter on that occasion claimed no pre-eminence. Nor was any particular deference paid to him by the council. He related his *experience*, precisely as did Paul and Barnabas. *James* seems to have been *in the chair* on that occasion. He speaks much more like an infallible person than any of the rest. He says, "Wherefore my sentence is," &c. What a pity it is for the church of Rome that Peter had not said that instead of James. We should never have heard the last of it. But it was the bishop of Jerusalem, and not the bishop of Rome, who said it. It cannot be helped now. Will my Catholic brother take down his *Douay* and read that chapter?

But again, if Peter was infallible, I am surprised that Paul "*withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.*" Gal. 2 : 11. That was no way to treat a Pope. But Paul had always a *spice* of the Protestant about him. And yet Peter did not resent Paul's treatment of him, for in his second Epistle he speaks of him as "our beloved brother Paul." I suppose that

Peter himself did not know he was infallible. Men do not always know themselves.

Once more, if the superiority among the disciples belonged to Peter, it has struck me as strange that, when a dispute arose among them who should be the greatest, our Savior did not take Peter, instead of a little child, "and set *him* in the midst of them," and remind the others that the *supremacy* had been given to him. I think the other apostles could not have understood Christ in that declaration, "Thou art Peter," &c. as the church of Rome now understands him, otherwise the dispute about superiority could never have arisen.

Now, according to the Catholic doctrine, Peter being infallible, each successive Pope inherits his infallibility, and therefore never a man of them could err in a matter of faith—nor even the *woman* Joan, (for in the long list of *Papas*, there was by accident in the ninth century one *Mama*, though this, I am aware, is denied by some,)—even she retained none of the *frailty* of her sex.

It is well for the church of Rome that she does not contend that her popes are infallible in *practice*, for if she did, she would find some difficulty in reconciling that doctrine with history. It is very true that one may err in *practice* and not in *faith*. Nevertheless, when I see a man very *crooked* in practice, I cannot believe that he is always exactly *straight* in doctrine. I cannot believe that all I hear from him is good and true, when what I see in him is false and bad. Take for example such a one as Pope Alexander sixth; when he, the father of such a hopeful youth as *Cesar Borgia*, and the chief of ecclesiastics too, tells me, with a

grave air and solemn tone, that it is a shocking wicked thing for an ecclesiastic to marry, I cannot help demurring somewhat to the statement of Cesar's father. But I must proceed with my reasons.

3. If a man says one thing one day, and the next day says another thing quite contrary to it, I am of opinion that he is one of the days in error. But what has this to do with the business in hand? Have not the Popes always pronounced the same thing? Have *they* ever contradicted each other? Ask rather, whether the wind has always, ever since there was a wind, blown from the same quarter. Now here is a reason why I cannot allow infallibility to belong to either popes or *councils.*

4. I would ask just for information, how it was, when there were *three* contemporary Popes, each claiming infallibility. Had they it between them? or which of them had it? What was the name of the one that there was *no mistake* about? How were the common people to ascertain the infallible one? for you know their salvation depended on their being in communion with the true Bishop of Rome, the rightful successor of St. Peter.

5. The more common opinion among the Catholics is, I believe, that the infallibility resides in a Pope and general council together. Each is fallible by itself, but putting the two together, they are infallible! Now I admit that in some languages two negatives are equivalent to an affirmative; but I do not believe that two fallibles ever were or will be equivalent to an infallible. It is like saying that *two wrongs make a right.*

13. The Keys.

The Catholics, by which I mean *Roman* Catholics, since, though a Protestant, I believe in the holy Catholic, that is, *universal* church, and profess to be a member of it, at the same time that I waive all pretensions to being a Roman Catholic.—they make a great noise about the keys having been given to Peter; the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Well, it is true enough—they were given to him. The Bible says so, and we Protestants want no better authority than the Bible for any thing. We do not require the confirmation of tradition, and the unanimous consent of the fathers. We do not want any thing to *back* "Thus saith the Lord." Yes, the keys were given to Peter; it is said so in Matthew, 16: 19. This is one of those passages of Scripture which is *not* hard to be understood, as even they of Rome acknowledge. I am glad our brethren of that communion agree with us that there is something plain in the Bible; that there is one passage, at least, in which private interpretation arrives at the same result which they reach who follow in the track of the agreeing fathers! I suppose, if we could interpret all Scripture as much to the mind of the Catholics as we do this, they would let us alone about private interpretation.

Well, Peter has got the keys. What then? What are keys for? To unlock and open is one of the purposes served by keys. It was for this purpose, I suppose, that Peter received them: and for this purpose we find him using them. He opened the kingdom of heaven, that is, the Gospel Church, or Christian dis-

pensation, as the phrase "kingdom of heaven" often signifies. He opened it to both Jews and Gentiles: he preached the first sermon, and was the instrument of making the first converts among each. With one key he opened the kingdom of heaven to the Jews, and with the other to the Gentiles. This was a distinction conferred on Peter, it is true: but it was necessary that some one of the twelve should *begin* the business of preaching the Gospel. The whole twelve could not turn the keys and open the door. The power of *binding* and *loosing*, which was conferred on Peter when the keys were given him, was not confined to him, but, as Matthew testifies in the next chapter but one, was extended to all the disciples.

Well, Peter opened the kingdom of heaven; and what became of the keys then? Why, there being no farther use for them, they were laid aside. I don't know what has become of them, for my part. When a key has opened a door which is not to be shut again, there being no more use for the key, it does not matter much what becomes of it. Hence, in the history of the Acts of the Apostles, we hear no more about the keys; and Peter, in his Epistles, says never a word about them. He wrote his second Epistle to put Christians in remembrance, but I don't find him reminding them of the keys. The truth is, having used them for the purpose for which they were given him, he had after that no more concern about them.

But many fancy that Peter kept these keys all his life and then transmitted them to another, and he to a third, and so from hand to hand they have come along down till *what's his name* at Rome has them now—the Pope. And they say these keys signify the

authority given to the church, and especially to the Popes. But I find no Bible warrant for this assertion. Christ does not say that he gave the keys to Peter to give to somebody else, and Peter does not say that he gave them to any body else, and no body since Peter has been able to produce the keys. This settles the matter in my mind. I want to know where the keys are.

But some suppose that Peter took them to heaven with him, and that he stands with them at the gate of heaven, as porter, to admit and keep out whom he will. But this notion does not tally very well with certain passages of Scripture. Christ tells his disciples that he goes to prepare a place for them, and that he will come again and receive them unto himself: John, 14 : 3. *He* will do it. He will not trust the business to Peter. "He that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth, is not Peter, but Christ." Rev. 3 : 7.

But the Catholics will have it that Peter is the one; and he, having the keys, they think that they will all be admitted, while never a soul of us, poor Protestants, will. They may be mistaken, however. I do not know what right they have to put in an exclusive claim to Peter. I see no resemblance between Peter and a Roman Catholic—none in the world. I never care to see a truer and better Protestant than I take him to be. But if he does stand at the gate of heaven with such authority as the Catholics ascribe to him, yet I suppose he will not deny that he wrote the Epistles called his. Well, then, if he shall hesitate to admit Protestants, we shall only have to remind him of his Epistles. He does not say any thing in them

about his being Pope. No, he says, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder." Not a word says he about the Mass, or the Seven Sacraments, or Transubstantiation. Let the reader turn to his Epistles, and see just what he does say; I think he will not find any thing in those Epistles to frighten Protestants.

But there is still another supposition, viz. that Peter is not perpetual porter of heaven; but each Pope, as he dies, succeeds to that office—one relieving another. I do not know how it is, but I judge, if all the Popes have been in their day porters of Paradise, many of them must have tended *outside*. They have not been universally the best of men, I think history informs us. But I will not mention any names.

One thing more. In Catholic pictures and prints (for that very *spiritual* religion abounds with these) you will see the keys of which we have been speaking represented as made to suit all the complicated modern wards, as if fresh from some manufactory at Birmingham or Sheffield! I do not suppose the keys Peter received answered exactly to this ingenious representation of them.

---

14. The Head of the Church.

The church is represented in the Scriptures as a *body*. Of course, therefore, it must have a *head;* and that same blessed book tells us who the head is. And

who, think you, is the head of the church? Who but *Christ* himself? Who else is fit to be its head—its source of influence and government? I will produce the passages of Scripture in proof of Christ's headship presently.

But the Catholics say that the Pope is the head of the church. Ah, is he? Where is the proof that he is? Now there is nothing which irritates a Catholic so soon as to ask him for *proof*. "Proof, indeed!" he says. "Do you ask proof of an infallible church? What is the use of infallibility, if we must prove every thing? These are truly most degenerate days. The time was when nobody demanded proof; but now every little sprig of a Protestant must have *reasons* to support assertions. He calls for proof. And he must have it from the Bible. He will not believe any thing in religion unless some text can be cited in support of it. Things have come to a pretty pass indeed." It is even so. We plead guilty to the charge. For every thing alleged to be a doctrine of Christianity, we confess we do require some proof out of the writings of some evangelist or apostle. And since our Catholic brethren will not gratify us by adducing the scriptural warrant for believing the Pope or Bishop of Rome to be the head of the church, we will do them the favor of consulting the Scriptures for them. Well, we begin with Genesis, and we go through to Revelation, searching all the way for some proof that the Pope is the head of the church. But so far are we from finding any evidence that he is the head of the church, that we find not a particle of proof that he is *that* or any thing. We find no account of any such character as a Pope—not a word about him. The subject of the proposition,

that is, the Pope, does not seem to be known to that book at all. I really do not wonder that it frets a Catholic when we send him to the Bible for proof that the Pope is the head of the church.

But though we discover nothing in the Bible about a Pope, yet we find much about the head of the church. In Ephesians, 1 : 22, 23, Christ is said to be "the head over all things to the church, which is his body." Now, if the church is *his* body, surely he must be the head of it, as well as head over all things to it. Will any one say that the Pope of Rome is the head of *Christ's* body? That is shocking. And yet the Catholics are told that they *must* believe it; and seeing they cannot help it, they do somehow or other contrive to believe it. In Eph. 5 : 23, it is explicitly declared that "Christ is the head of the church." The same is repeated in Col. 1 : 18—"He (Christ) is the head of the body, the church."

Our brethren of the Catholic church have long been in the habit of asking where our religion was before the Reformation. They may see where one doctrine of it was fifteen hundred years before the Reformation. One would suppose, from the way they talk, that they supposed the Bible was written a considerable time after the Reformation, and that it was then got up to support the Protestant heresy! I might ask them, but that they do not like to be asked questions, lest they should not be able to answer them, where their doctrine of the Pope's headship of the church was when the New Testament was written, i. e. some seventeen hundred and fifty or eighteen hundred years ago. But I will withdraw the question. It may seem unkind to press it.

Now, since the Bible says that Christ is the head of the church, if the Pope also is, there must be *two* heads of the church. But there is only *one* body. Why should there be two heads? Is the church a *monster?* Besides, if there had been another head, Christ would have been spoken of in the Scriptures as one of the heads of the church, or as *a* head of the church. But he is called *the* head of the church. The article is definite, denoting only one. There is not a syllable in the Bible about another head. Indeed the language of the Bible does not admit of there being another. Yet the Catholics say there is another; and it is their Pope. "Christ being absent, they say, it is necessary there should be a visible human head to represent him on earth." Now the Pope, they say, is this *visible* head of the church—the head that you can *see*. But is their assumption correct, that Christ is absent? Is he absent? Hear: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Was he absent from Paul? He says: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." A *visible* head! What do we want of a visible head? Of what use to us—the part of the body here—is a head a way off at Rome? It is no better than a *caput mortuum* to us.

But what if we admit the possibility of a visible human head of the church, who made the Pope that head? Did he inherit this also from St. Peter? Was Peter head of the church? He, more modest than his pretended successors, does not any where claim that title. I know the Catholics hold him to be the *rock*—the *foundation* of the church; but I really did not know

that they regarded him, whom, however they exalt, they still consider but as a mere man, as capable of being *head* of the church too. It is not too much to speak of Christ as both the foundation and head of the church, but to speak of Peter, *poor* Peter, as we are accustomed to call him when we think of the scene of the denial, as both foundation and head of the church, is really carrying the matter rather far. How little Peter thought he was *both*, when "he went out and wept bitterly!" How little he knew of himself!

The Pope the head of the church!! Then the church is the Pope's body!! Alas for the church!

---

15. The Power to Forgive Sins.

Seculum modestum I rather suppose will not be the designation by which the 19th century will be distinguished in history from her sister centuries. I know not whether any age has been more remarkable for cases of unfounded *pretension* than the present. The case, however, of which I am to take notice, did not originate in the 19th century. It has existed many hundred years. I do not wonder at its surviving the dark ages, but that it should have lived so far into the luminous 19th does somewhat surprise me. The pretension to which I allude is that made by the Catholic priesthood. What do you think it is which they *pretend* they can do? *Forgive sins.* They *pretend* that they have power over sins, to remit or retain them.

They *claim* that the prerogative of pardon is lodged with them. And that is the reason why they receive confessions. Confession to a priest would be a farce, if it was not thought that he could forgive.

The first thing that strikes me is the contrariety of this notion to common sense. The idea of being pardoned by any other than the being offended, seems absurd. What! a fellow-sinner of a priest pardon sins against God! It is as if of *two* debtors, one should play the creditor and forgive the other his debt, without any consultation with the real creditor. That would be a strange way of getting rid of debts. I always thought he to whom the debt is due ought to have a *say* in the matter of remitting it. If I had disposed of a debt in that manner I should always be afraid that it would some day or other be exacted—that the real creditor would appear and make his demand. Then it would be a poor *come off* for me to say that my fellow-debtor forgave me the debt. I will tell you what I expect. I expect that a great deal which the priests forgive will be exacted notwithstanding. Catholics talk of going to the priest and getting their *old scores wiped off*, just as if it were but a *slate and pencil* memorandum, which any one can rub out. The sin of man is not thus recorded. It is "written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond." It is not so easily obliterated.

But is there not Scripture in support of the priests' claim? See John, 20 : 23. Does not Christ say to his disciples: "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained?" Yes, he says that *to his disciples —the apostles*. But pray, what right have the priests

to found a claim of theirs on a grant made to the apostles? They do indeed *come after* the apostles, but they are their *successors* in no other sense. I should like to know how the priests *prove* that they inherit the apostolical power of remitting sins. But I forget that they scorn a resort to *proof*.

The power communicated in that grant to the apostles was merely *ministerial* and *declarative*. It was no less true after than before that grant was made, that none can forgive sins but God only. That the power was *declarative* merely, that is, that the apostles were empowered to remit and retain sins only as they were authorized and enabled to make a correct statement to mankind of the way and means of salvation, to express the conditions of pardon and condemnation, and to propose the terms of life and death, is clear to me from the fact that the conferring of it was immediately preceded by the Savior's breathing on them, and saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Now, this communication of the Spirit qualified them for the *declarative* remission and retention of sins. They were thereby inspired to pronounce on what grounds sins are remitted and retained by God.

This was the power over sins granted to the apostles, and I shall show presently that this *declarative* power is all they pretend ever to have exercised. Now, the priests have no right to claim even this power, except in that subordinate sense in which it is possessed by all who are authorized to preach the Gospel. Did Christ ever breathe on them, and say to them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," that they should claim equality with the apostles? The effect of the *inspiration* is not so manifest in the case of the priests as

it was in the case of the apostles, if I may be permitted to express an opinion.

But the priests claim far more than ever entered the thoughts of the apostles. They are not satisfied with the ministerial and declarative power over sins They claim a *magisterial* and *authoritative* power to remit and retain them. Consequently they call sinners to come and confess their sins to them. Did Peter and the other apostles, the very men to whom Christ said, "whosesoever sins ye remit," &c. ever do such a thing? You read in the Acts of the Apostles of *synagogues* and *proseuches*, or places of prayer, but do you find any thing about *confession-boxes* there? Does there seem to have been any thing *auricular* in the transactions of the day of Pentecost?

There is the case of *Simon Magus* that strikes me as in point. If Peter and John had had the power of forgiving sin, could they not have exercised it in favor of Simon? But we find Peter addressing him just as any Protestant minister would have done: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." How differently the Roman priest would have done! He would have said, "Well, Simon, and what have you to say for yourself? Ah, that is very bad, very bad. But if you are sorry, Simon, I forgive you. Only I cannot let you off without doing some penance. You must say so many *paternosters*, and you must not eat meat for so many days." This is the way in which the boasted successors of Peter manage these matters. But, they will say, Simon was not penitent, otherwise perhaps Peter would have pardoned him. But I wonder if pardon would have waited for Peter's

action in the matter, if there had been penitence in the heart of the sorceror. I suspect not. I suspect the gracious Lord, when he sees contrition in any soul, does not withhold pardon till a priest or even an apostle shall intervene and act in the matter. And when the good angels have ascertained that a sinner has repented, I rather suppose they do not suspend their rejoicing until he has gone to confession, and has got absolution from the priest.

What a glorious book the Bible is! I wish the authorities of the Catholic church would condescend to strike it off the list of *prohibited* books, and *allow* the Lord to speak to his creatures. I wish they would let their people, the many thousands that on the Sabbath crowd their chapels and cathedrals, read, or hear what Jehovah says to "every one" in that wonderful chapter, the 55th of Isaiah. It is indeed a wonderful chapter. But the Catholics don't know any thing about it. No; and they have never heard of that precious and glorious verse, the 18th of the 1st chapter of Isaiah, in which thus saith the Lord to the sinner, "Come now, and let us" (you and I, sinner!) "reason together." And then follows the reasoning, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Ask the awakened sinner, or the recently pardoned, what he would take for that passage. He esteems it above all price; and to the Christian it becomes every day more and more a theme of wonder and delight. But the Catholics don't know that the Lord has ever made any such kind and condescending proposal to his creatures. They never hear of the call of God to come and reason with him.

The only "come" they hear is the priest's call. I pity them.

But it is no wonder that the priests treat the people as they do, for if they allowed them to know what the Lord says to them, they would be very apt to go directly to God in Christ, and leave the priest out of the question. And then where would be the *importance* of the priest? and his *emolument*, where?

---

16. A Catholic Book Reviewed.

I happened to lay my hand the other day on a little book entitled, "The Christian's Guide to Heaven, a Manual for Catholics," to which was appended some hymns. The book was published in Baltimore by a respectable Catholic bookseller, and under the sanction of the Archbishop. Well, said I to myself, this is good authority. I will look into this book. I know what Protestants say of Catholics. I will see now what Catholics say of themselves. Men cannot complain when we take their own account of themselves; and I like the way of judging people out of their own mouths, because it shuts their mouths so far as reply is concerned. I resolved that I would compare the statements and doctrines of this book professing to be a guide to heaven, with the statements and doctrines of that bigger book which is the Protestant's guide to heaven. You will know that I mean the Bible. That is our manual—that the guide we consult and follow

However, if a book agrees with the Bible, that is enough.

So I began to read; and one of the first things that I came to was, "Conditions of plenary indulgences." Indulgences! thought I. What does a Christian want of indulgences? He is apt enough to indulge himself. And how are indulgences to help him to heaven? I should rather pronounce self-denial the road. Indulgences not *partial*, but *plenary!* I should think plenary indulgence on any condition was enough to ruin one. If by indulgence the Catholics mean pardon, they have chosen an unfortunate way to express it. Why not say *full pardon*, instead of plenary indulgence? But I suppose pardon expresses what God exercises, and indulgence what the church grants. I should like to know, however, what right the church has to grant any thing of the kind.

Well, the conditions enumerated were four. I took note only of the first, which was in these words: "To confess their sins with a sincere repentance to a priest approved by the bishop." This begins very well, and goes on well for a time. Confession of sin, with sincere repentance, *is* truly a condition of pardon. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." But what a pity the condition did not stop there, or if any thing was added in regard to the object of the confession, that it did not designate God as the being to whom the sins should be confessed. The sins are all *done* against him, and why should they not be *told* to him? I cannot get rid of the notion that we ought to confess our sins to God, the being whom we have offended by them. But no, says this guide to heaven, the confession must be made to

a priest; it is good for nothing without it. If the publican, of whom we read, had lived now, it would have been quite irregular, according to the Catholic notion, that he should have gone down to his house justified, when he confessed only to God. And the penitent must take care what sort of a priest it is to whom he confesses, else he might as well remain impenitent. It must be a priest *approved by the bishop.* Well, now, this is a queer arrangement, that our pardon should be suspended on such a condition—that angels, in other words, must wait before they express any joy that a sinner has repented, until he has gone and told his sins to a priest approved by a bishop! Who suspended it there, I wonder? Not Isaiah. Read his 55th chapter. Nor Peter, nor Solomon, nor John, nor Paul. Read them and see. There is not a word in the Bible about confessing to a priest. So I found that the two guides did not agree in this matter. The Catholic Manual said the confession must be to a priest; but the holy Scriptures insist on no such thing, but direct that the confession be made to God.

This thought occurred to me: What if a sinner confess his sins with a sincere repentance, though not to a priest, what is to be done with his soul? Must pardon be denied him, and he be consigned to perdition, because, though he confessed penitently, yet he did it not to a priest? Really this is making rather too much of the priest. It is making too important a character of him altogether. I do not believe that our salvation is so dependent on the deference we pay the priest.

Before the conditions, on one of which I have been remarking, are mentioned, there is this general statement: "Plenary indulgences granted to the faithful

throughout these states, *at the following times;*" and then follows a specification of *nine* different seasons when plenary indulgences may be had. I did not know before that pardons were confined to any set times; I always supposed that they might be had summer and winter, night and day, and at any hour of either—in short, whenever a penitent heart breathes its desire to God. My mistake must have arisen from the fact that I have been in the habit of consulting the Bible on these matters. I never saw "The Christian's Guide to Heaven" before in my life. I have always used the Bible as a guide, for want of a better.

Now that I am on the subject of confession, I may as well make another reference to the manual. There is an article or chapter headed "The Confiteor." In it the person wishing to be guided to heaven makes this confession, from which it will appear that Catholics do not confine their confessions to the priest, but extend them to many other beings: "I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary, ever virgin, to blessed Michael the archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the saints, that I have sinned." Now, I do not see the use of naming so many. The confession, I think, should have stopped with the first mentioned—Almighty God. What have the rest to do with it? How is it any of their business? The person has not sinned against them. Surely every sinner may say to God, "Against thee, thee ONLY have I sinned," since David could. Besides, this coupling of these creatures with the Creator, as worthy equally with himself to receive our confessions of sin, savors strongly of idolatry. Confession is made to them on the same principle that

prayer is. Each is an act of worship—one of those things which should be confined exclusively to God. I wonder the Catholics will not be satisfied with one great and glorious object of worship, God, the Father Son, and Spirit. Why will they in their devotions associate creatures with the Creator? The book I am reviewing contains numerous and very offensive examples of it. I shall continue the review in my next

---

17. The Review of the Catholic Book continued.

The next thing that struck me as worthy of notice in the perusal of the book was this—that the devout Catholic is represented as making the following solemn declaration concerning the Holy Scriptures: "Neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the fathers." I smiled when I read this, and I thought within myself, if that is his determination, he will not be likely ever to take them at all. What an intention this, which the Catholic expresses—never to attach any meaning to a passage which he may read in the Bible, until he has first ascertained *whether* certain ancient persons called the fathers all agreed in any interpretation of it, and if so, what that interpretation is! What should give such authority and weight to the interpretation of the fathers? Why cannot we ascertain what the Bible means as well as they could? What helps had they which we have not? and why

require that they be unanimous? What a roundabout method this of finding out what a book means! *First*, the reader has got to ascertain who are entitled to be called *fathers*. He must make out a list of them all If one is overlooked, it vitiates the interpretation, though all the rest should agree in it. But supposing him to have got a catalogue of the whole number from Barnabas to Bernard, the *next* step in the process is to ascertain how they all interpreted the Bible. For this purpose he must pore over their works. But some of them left no works behind them. How shall he ever find out what they thought of this and that passage of Scripture? And yet he must somehow or other ascertain their opinions, else how can he compare them with the opinions of the other fathers, and discover their agreement with them? For you will remember the consent must be *unanimous*. Others of the fathers left works behind them, but they have not come down to us. How shall the reader of the Bible know what those lost works contained? Yet he must know what they thought, else how can he be sure that they thought in accordance with the views of those fathers whose works are preserved to us. I cannot see how this difficulty is to be got over, for my part. It is altogether beyond me. But supposing it to be surmounted, there remains the task of comparing the opinions of all these Greek and Latin fathers, to the number of a hundred or two, one with another, to see if they all agree; for the consent, you know, must be unanimous. Those parts of Scripture in the interpretation of which they did not agree, are to go for nothing. Indeed, if ninety-nine should be found to accord in a particular interpretation, it must be rejected if the hundredth father

had a different opinion of its meaning. I cannot help thinking that it is the better, as certainly it is the shorter and easier method, just for every one to take up and "search the Scriptures," and "if any lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally."

As the case is, I do not wonder that the Catholics do not read the Bible. They have not come to that yet. They are still among the fathers, searching out and comparing their opinions, so as to know how to *take* the Bible. By and by, if they live long enough, when they have ascertained what the fathers agreed on, they may go to reading the Scriptures.

It seems odd that one cannot, without mortal sin, attach a meaning to such a passage as John, 3 : 16, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," until he has first ascertained what Cyprian, Jerome, Hilary, both the Gregorys, and indeed all the fathers thought of it, and whether they agreed in their interpretation of it. How any one can read it without understanding it in spite of himself, I cannot see. Ah, but they say the Scriptures are so obscure. And are the fathers so very *clear*? Why cannot we understand the Greek of John and Paul, as well as that of Chrysostom?

The thing which next attracted my observation in the book was the following: "In the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead." The Mass! and what is that? The *Bible* could not tell me. So I had to resort to the *dictionary*. It is the name which the Catholics give to the sacrament of the Lord's supper;

or rather to the *half* of it; for you know they divide it, and giving the bread to the people, do with the wine I cannot tell what. They say that it is *perfect in one kind*, and anathematize all who say it is not. Their curse is on me now while I am writing. Nevertheless I must ask, if it was perfect in one kind, why did Christ institute it in both kinds? Why did he not stop with the bread, reserving the cup? Was it to make the sacrament more than perfect? But this is *reasoning*. I forget myself. The Catholics don't hold to reasoning.

An idea occurs to me here which I beg leave to express. If the sacrament is perfect in *either* kind, why do not the priests sometimes give the people the cup? Why do they always give them the bread? And why originally did they withhold the cup rather than the bread? Some persons may imagine a reason, but I will content myself with asking the question.

But to proceed. They say that "in the Mass *there is offered to God*," &c. Why, what do they mean? There is nothing offered to God. What is offered is to men. Christ says, offering to his disciples the bread, "take, eat," and reaching out the cup, he says, "drink ye *all* of it." There is something offered to men in this sacrament, even the precious memorials of the Savior's propitiatory death; but every one who reads the account, sees that there is nothing offered to God. Yet the Catholics, leaning on tradition, say there is in it "a true, proper and propitiatory sacrifice" offered to God. A sacrifice included in the sacrament! How is that? And a *propitiatory* sacrifice too! I always supposed that propitiatory sacrifices ceased with the offering up of the Great Sacrifice—

when the Lamb of God bled and died. Do we not read, that "by *one* offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," "now *once* in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself?" "Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many"—and it is said of his blood that it "cleanseth from all sin." I don't know what we want after this, of those *unbloody sacrifices* which the Catholics talk of as offered continually in the service of the Mass. What is the use of them, if they are *unbloody*, as they say, since "without shedding of blood is no remission?"

According to the Catholics, it was premature in Christ to say on the cross, "it is finished." They deny that it is finished. They say *it is going on* still—that Christ is offered whenever Mass is said. *Once* Christ was offered, the Bible says; but the Roman church affirms that he is offered *many times* daily, whenever and wherever mass is said!

I do really wonder that this religion has lasted so long in the world. How the human mind can entertain it for a day, I do not know. See how at every step it conflicts with reason. See in how many points it does violence to common sense. See, in this case, how boldly it contradicts the dying declaration of the Savior. It is a religion unknown to the Bible—and yet still in existence, aye, and they say, *making progress*, and that even in this home of freedom! If it be so, which I question, I blush that I am an American, and am almost ashamed that I am a man.

18. The Pope an Idolater.

It may seem a very uncharitable title I give this article. What, some will say, charge the Pope with being an idolater! What do you mean? I mean just what I say, that this boasted head of the church, and self-styled vicar of Christ, residing at Rome, ascribes divine attributes, and pays divine honors to a creature, even to a human being, a partaker in our mortality and sin! and if that is not idolatry, I don't know what idolatry is. If that is not idolatry, the worship of the golden calf was not—the worship of the host of heaven was not—the worship of the gods of Hindooism is not. What truer definition of idolatry can be given than that it is an ascribing of divine attributes, and a paying of divine honors to a creature? It does not matter what the creature is, whether it be the angel nearest the throne of God, or an onion that grows in the garden, such as they of Egypt once worshiped. It is its being a created thing—it is its being *not God*, that makes the service done it idolatry.

But can I make good this charge against the successor of St. Peter, as they call him? If I cannot, I sin not merely against charity, but against truth. But I can establish it. Nor will I derive the proof from the Pope's enemies; nor will I look for it in the histories of the Papacy. The Pope himself shall supply me with the proof. Out of his own mouth will I judge him. If his own words do not convict him of idolatry, believe it not. But if they do, away with the objection that it is an offence against charity to speak of such a thing as the Pope's being an idolater. My cha-

rity "rejoiceth in the truth." The charge can be uncharitable only by being untrue. It is too late in the day, I trust, for idolatry to find an apologist. But to the proof. Perhaps you suppose it is some obscure Pope of the night of times—the dark ages, that I am going to prove an idolater. No, it is a Pope of the nineteenth century—the present reigning Pope, Gregory XVI. He is the idolater; and here are his own words in proof of it. They are a part of the circular, or encyclical letter, sent forth by him on entering on his office, and addressed to all Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, and Bishops. The letter may be found in the Laity's Directory, 1833, and has been extensively published without any of its statements being contradicted. In it the Pope calls upon all the clergy to implore "that SHE, (the Virgin Mary,) who has been, through every great calamity, our Patroness and Protectress, may watch over us writing to you, and lead our mind by her heavenly influence, to those counsels which may prove most salutary to Christ's flock!" Is comment necessary? Observe, he recognizes *not God* as having been their defence, but *her* as having been their protectress in past calamities, and directs the clergy to pray to her to continue her watch over them! As contrast is one of the principles on which ideas are associated, I was reminded in reading this, of the 121st Psalm, in which the writer speaks of the one "that *keepeth* Israel." It is not *she*, according to the Psalmist, but *He*, the Lord which made heaven and earth, that keepeth Israel. But, according to the Pope, it is the Virgin Mary that keeps Israel; and he speaks of her as exerting a heavenly influence on the mind. I always thought it was the exclusive prerogative of Je-

hovah to have access to the mind, and to exert an immediate influence on it; and I cannot but think now that the Pope must *err* in this matter, though he speaks *ex cathedra*. I cannot believe he was exactly *infallible* when he wrote that letter.

But you have not heard the worst of it yet. In the same letter he says: "But that all may have a successful and happy issue, *let us raise our eyes* to the most blessed Virgin Mary, *who alone destroys heresies, who is our greatest hope*, yea, THE ENTIRE GROUND OF OUR HOPE!" The underscoring is mine, but the words are the Pope's. Now, just look at this. Did you ever hear any thing like it? Observe what Mary is said to be and to do; and what the clergy are exhorted to do. The Pope's religion cannot be the *oldest*, as they pretend. It is not the religion of the *Psalms*. In the 121st Psalm the writer says: "*I* will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord." And in the 123d, "Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us." But the Pope says: "Let us raise our eyes to the most blessed Virgin Mary." There is the difference between the Pope and the Psalmist. Protestants in this case side with the Psalmist; and in this particular our religion is not only older than Luther, but older even than the Pope.

I would inquire of the reader whether these prayers which the Pope would have the whole church address to the Virgin Mary, are not precisely such as are pro-

per to be addressed to God, and which others do address to him? Do they not ask of *her* just what ought to be asked of *Him*, and what he alone can give? After asking such things as the Catholics are directed to ask of the Virgin Mary, what remains to be asked of God in prayer? And is not this putting a creature in the place of God? Indeed, is it not putting God quite out of the question? The eyes are raised in prayer to the Virgin, and they are lifted no higher. There they fix. Is not this idolatry? And you see he is not satisfied himself with being an idolater, but he wants the entire clergy, and of course the whole Catholic church, to join him in his idolatry!

I wish the Pope had explained how the blessed Virgin *destroys heresies*. He says she does it, and she *alone*. I should think it rather belonged to "the Spirit of Truth" to destroy heresies, and to "guide into all truth." But no, says the Pope, the Spirit of Truth has nothing to do with it. It is all done by the blessed Virgin! She "*alone* destroys heresies."

The Catholics complain that we call their Pope *Antichrist*. But I would appeal to any one to say if he is not Antichrist, who, overlooking Christ altogether, says of another, that *she* is "our greatest hope, yea, the entire ground of our hope?" Is not that *against* Christ? The Bible speaks of *him* as "our hope," 1 Tim. 1 : 1; yea, of him as our *only* hope; for "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3 : 11. "Neither is there salvation in any other" Acts, 4 : 12. It would seem from this, that Christ is the *ground of hope*. But not so, says the Pope; the blessed Virgin is "the entire ground of our hope." By the way, I should not be surprised if

that hope should disappoint its possessor. Now, is not the Pope Antichrist? Well, if he is an idolater and Antichrist, ought he to be adhered to? What sort of a body must that be, which has such a head? I think I should not like to be a *member* of it. And I must confess that I am against such a person having any more power in our free, enlightened, and happy America, than he has already. Pray let us not, after having broken the chains of political thraldom, come in bondage to idolatry. Let us not, after having extricated our persons from the power of a *king*, subject our *minds* to the spiritual domination of a *Pope*.

---

19. Charles X. an Idolater.

Having proved his holiness the Pope an idolater, I proceed now to prove "his most Christian majesty" *that was*, the ex-king of France, an idolater; which having done, I shall have gone a good way towards proving the whole Catholic church idolatrous, since, as you know, it is their boast that they all think alike, and that there are no such varieties of opinion among them as among us unfortunate Protestants; though, by the way, it is not so strange that they all think alike, when one thinks for all.

I proved *Gregory* an idolater out of his own mouth. I shall do the same in the case of *Charles*. On the occasion of the baptism (with *oil*, *spittle*, &c. an improvement on the simple water-system of the Bible)

of his young grand-son, the Duke of Bordeaux, this was his language: "Let us invoke for him the protection of the mother of God, the queen of the angels; let us implore her to watch over his days, and remove far from his cradle the misfortunes with which it has pleased Providence to afflict his relatives, and to conduct him by a less rugged path than I have had, to eternal felicity." He was anxious that the little boy should have a protector, one to watch over him, and to remove his misfortunes, and to conduct him by an easy path to eternal life. For this purpose, one not educated a Catholic would have supposed that he would apply to the omniscient and almighty God. I do not know who can do those things besides God. But no. "His majesty" does no more apply to God, than did his holiness in a similar case. I suppose it would have been heresy if he had. They would have thought him going over to Protestantism. His holiness and his majesty both make application to the creature rather than to the Creator. Charles does not say, "Let us invoke for him the protection of God," but of a woman, a woman indeed highly favored of the Lord, and of blessed memory, but still a woman.

He calls her, according to the custom of his church, "the mother of God." I suppose you know that phrase is not in the Bible. And there is a good reason for it, the idea is not as old as the Bible. The Bible is an old book, almost as old as our religion. Roman Catholicism is comparatively young. I will not remark on the phrase, *mother of God*, seeing it is not in the Bible, and since it has often been remarked upon by others. But there is another thing the ex-king says of her, on which I will spend a word or two He calls

her "the queen of the angels." Now we read in the Bible, of Michael, the archangel, or prince of angels, but we do not read of the angels having a queen. We read also of a *king* in heaven, but not a word about a queen. I don't know where he got this idea of a queen of angels. He certainly did not get it out of the Holy Scriptures, and yet these Scriptures, I had always supposed, contain all that we know about the angels. I wish he would tell us from his retirement where he got the idea, for he speaks very positive about the angels having a queen. It is true, we do read in one place in the Bible of a *queen of heaven*, but the worship of her was so evidently idolatry, that I presume the Catholics will not quote it as authorizing the title they give and the honor they pay to the Virgin Mary. The account is found in Jeremiah, 44. If any one will read the chapter he will see what that prophet thought of those worshipers of the queen of heaven. Now, if the worship of a queen of heaven by the Jews was denounced as idolatry, and ruin came on them in consequence of it, is not a similar worship performed by Catholics as idolatrous, and as dangerous?

But no matter what he calls her, he asks her to do what only God can do. He treats her precisely as if she were divine. Is it not so—and is not this idolatry? He ascribes divine perfections to her—omniscience, else how could she watch over the child; and omnipotence, else how could she ward off evil from him; and he speaks of her as the guide of souls to eternal life. The Psalmist considered it was the prerogative of God to do this. He says, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." But the ex-king looks to Mary to conduct the young

duke to eternal life. What the Psalmist expects from God, the ex-king expects from Mary. Is not this putting a creature in the place of God, the Creator? Every one must see that it is shocking idolatry, and that the man who uses such language is as truly an idolater as any devotee of Juggernaut.

I do really wonder that the Catholics continue to call their system Christianity. It is by a great misnomer it is so called. It is not the proper name for it at all. It should be called by some such name as *Marianism*, rather than Christianity. In Christianity the principal figure is Christ; but he is not the principal figure in the Catholic religion. Mary is. Therefore the religion should be called after her, Marianism, and not after Christ, Christianity. Catholics are not the disciples of Christ, but of Mary; she is their confidence and hope. Pope Gregory says *she* "is our greatest hope, yea, the entire ground of our hope." Now, I think that the religion of such people ought to be called after the one who is their greatest hope; and I have suggested a name to the Catholics, which I advise them to adopt. Let their religion be called *Marianism*, and let them leave to us the name Christianity, since Christ "is *our* hope."

Having proved his Holiness, and his most Christian Majesty, the two principal characters in the church of Rome, idolaters, I think I may as well stop here.

20. Idolatry near Home.

It is wonderful what a propensity there is in fallen men to idolatry. How they do love to worship the creature rather than the Creator! In a certain church, which need not be named, the blessed virgin, though a mere woman, receives ten, perhaps a hundred times as much religious honor as does the blessed Savior, though he be "the mighty God," deserving of all homage, while she merits barely respectful remembrance. One that has much intercourse with Catholics would suppose the *mother* to be the Savior of the world, rather than the *Son*. They make her to be the principal advocate of sinners in heaven. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Who? St. John says, "*Jesus Christ* the righteous"—the Catholics say it is *Mary!* So they differ—we Protestants side with John.

I have lately met with an idolatrous temple, that is, a church or chapel avowedly erected in honor of a creature, and dedicated to a creature. Is not that a temple of idolatry? Can there be a more accurate definition of such a place? Well, I have seen one—and I have not been a voyage to *India* neither. Some think there is no idolatry nearer than India; and when they hear of an idol-temple they immediately think of Juggernaut. But it is a mistake. I have not been out of the United States of America, and yet I have seen a temple of idolatry. I will state the case, and let every one judge for himself. If I am under an erroneous impression I shall be glad to be corrected. The

case is this: On the Catholic chapel in *Annapolis Maryland*, is this inscription, "IN HONOREM DEI PARÆ VIRGINIS." It is Latin. The English of it is, "In honor of the Virgin, the mother of God." If I have not rightly translated it, some of those who worship in Latin can correct me.

Now, what does this mean? It *seems* to signify that the chapel was erected, and is continued in honor of, that is, *for the worship* of the Virgin Mary. The being in whose honor a chapel is erected is worshiped in it. If not, how is it in honor of him? The inscription signifies *dedication* to the Virgin Mary. Now, the being to whom a place of religious worship is dedicated is always the object of the worship there rendered. This is universally understood. Hence we dedicate our churches to the Triune God, for him we worship in them. They are erected *in honor* of him. No one mistakes the meaning of these inscriptions. When we read on the Unitarian church in Baltimore this inscription in Greek, "To the only God," we understand that the church is consecrated to the service of the only God, and it is precisely the same as if the inscription had been in the style of that at Annapolis, *in honor* of the only God. So when Paul found at Athens an altar with this inscription, "To the unknown God," he inferred immediately that worship was intended, for he says, "whom therefore ye ignorantly worship:" suppose the inscription had been "in honor of the unknown God," would not the apostle's inference have been the same? Nothing is more clear than that the inscription on which I am remarking implies that the chapel in question is dedicated to the worship of the Virgin Mary; and she being a creature,

this constitutes it a temple of idolatry, and those who worship in it idolaters!

Let no man say that the inscription implies no more than that the chapel is named after Mary. Some Protestants name their churches after saints, but the name is not given in any case *in honor* of the saint. St. Paul's in London was not built in honor of St. Paul. It is simply so denominated. But here we have a chapel *in honor* of the Virgin, and she is called *Mother of God*, apparently to justify the worship which the authors of the chapel intend her. If this were the only proof that Catholics worship the Virgin Mary, we might overlook it; but it is only one of many. No one thing is more susceptible of demonstration, less capable of denial, than that Roman Catholics render unto this creature that which is due to God alone, religious worship. See for proof, their own Rhemish Testament with the notes. *Therefore they are idolaters.* I am sorry to say it, because I am sorry there is any occasion for saying it. But the time has come to speak out. This religion is threatening America, and it should be known, it should be proclaimed in the ear of every Christian, and every patriot, that it is something worse than mere *error*. And something more to be dreaded far than *tyranny*, which also it is, and ever has been, and must be—it is IDOLATRY. It puts another, and a creature, in the place of God; or if it discards not him, it does what is as offensive to him, it associates other and inferior objects of worship with him—and this his jealousy will not suffer. Whatever this great people are to become, I do hope we shall never be a nation of idolaters—creature-worshipers. We had better be, what God forbid we ever should be,

a nation of slaves. I do verily believe that the Roman Catholic religion has only to be universally adopted to make us *both*.

---

21. Praying to Saints.

This is one of the numerous points in which Catholics and Protestants differ from each other. They, the Catholics, pray to departed saints. This they acknowledge they do, nor are they at all ashamed of the practice, but endeavor to justify it. If any one doubts that they hold to the *invocation of saints*, as they express it, let him consult the notes to their own Rhemish Testament, or look into their book of prayers, where he will read the very language in which they make their supplication to the saints.

We Protestants do *not* pray to saints, and we think we have pretty good reasons for not doing it. We will mention some of them, in the hope that they will appear to be equally good reasons why Catholics should not pray to saints.

1. We do not feel the need of saints to pray to. We have a great and good God to go unto, whose ear is ever open to our cry, and we think that is enough; we do not want any other object of prayer. Whenever we feel the need of any thing, we judge it best to apply directly to our heavenly Father, especially since James, one of the saints, testifies, that "every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." Others may,

in their necessity, if they please, apply to the saints but we choose to ask of the Great Giver of all good. In doing so, we think we are much more likely to receive than if we invoke the saints.

It is true, being sinners, we need an advocate with the Father, but we do not need more than one, and him we have, as John, another saint, testifies, in Jesus Christ: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." John speaks of only one advocate, and Paul asserts that as there is but one God, so there is but one *mediator* between God and men. Yet the Catholics will have it, that there are advocates many and mediators many. The notes of the Rhemish translators on 1 Tim. 2 : 5, and 1 John. 2 : 1, assert the doctrine of a plurality of mediators and advocates. The object of those notes is to show, that if any man sin, he has many advocates with the Father, and that there are more mediators than one between God and men; the very reverse of what those texts assert! I am aware that the Catholics say that saints are mediators only in a subordinate sense; but I say they are mediators in *no* sense. Does the Bible speak of them as mediators in *any* sense? Those words, "mediator" and "advocate," are in the Bible sacredly appropriated to Christ. There is but one, and it is he. We come to the Father by him. *To* him we come immediately. Here we need no daysman.

2. We Protestants have always regarded prayer as a part of worship, as much as praise and confession of sin. Now, our Savior says, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him *only* shalt thou serve." We dare not, therefore, pray to any other than God. We would not like to be guilty of the idolatry of worshiping a creature.

3. If we were disposed to pray to the saints, yet we should not exactly know how to do it. Were we to pray to them generally, without singling any out by name, it would be a kind of praying at random; and we strongly suspect that our requests would not be attended to, for it may be among saints in heaven, as it is among their less perfect brethren on earth, that what is made every body's business comes to be regarded as nobody's. If, on the other hand, we apply to specific saints, and invoke them by name, this supposes that we know just who the saints are. It implies either that we could see into their hearts while they lived, or that we can see into heaven now—both which far outreach our power. We might make some sad mistake in praying to deceased men who have passed for saints. It is easy enough to ascertain who the church regards as saints, but the canonized may not exactly correspond to the sanctified. But, supposing this difficulty removed, and that we know certain individuals, who, having once lived on earth, are now in heaven: the next thing is, to make them hear us, for there is manifestly no use in preferring requests to those who cannot hear them. How is this to be done? The saints are in heaven—the suppliant sinner is on earth, and the distance between them is great. Saints in heaven are not within call of sinners on earth. Where is the proof of it? If I say, "Peter, pray for me," how is he to know I say it? Peter is not omnipresent. Do they say that God communicates to him the fact; but where is the proof of that? Besides, what does it amount to? God, according to this theory, informs Peter that a certain sinner on earth wants him, Peter, to ask him, the Lord, to grant him something. This

is a roundabout method of getting at the thing. The man had better, a great deal, not trouble Peter, but say at once, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

But the Catholics ask with an air of triumph, if we do not request living saints to pray for us. We do, for we have inspired authority for that. But that is not praying *to* them. There is a wide difference between praying to a saint in heaven, and asking a fellow-traveler to Zion on earth to pray TO GOD for us. Every one must see that. When a Christian asks his minister or his Christian friend to beseech God for him, he does not consider that he is praying to him or invoking him. Besides, we never ask one to pray for us, unless we know he is within hearing. We should think it very silly to do so. We must have proof of his presence before we think of making any request of him. Yet the Catholics are continually making requests of creatures, of whose presence with them they have not a particle of proof, and who, being creatures, it is certain cannot be present with *all* that call upon them. How many individuals are every day, at the same hour, calling on the blessed Virgin for assistance! It is all folly, unless she be omnipresent—a goddess, which the Bible certainly does not represent her as being. She occupies but one small spot in the universe of God, and it is probably a great way off. She cannot hear, even if she could help. Do you suppose that her calm repose in heaven is suffered to be disturbed by the ten thousand confused voices that cry to her without ceasing from earth? Never.

In looking over the Bible, the book which contains the religion of Protestants, and which, being older than the Roman Catholic religion, proves the seni-

ority of Protestantism over Popery, I find no account of praying to saints. I do not read of Joshua praying to Moses; or of Elisha invoking Elijah. No, there is not a word of what constitutes so much of the devotion of the Catholic in either Testament. We do not find any thing in the Acts or Epistles about praying to the beloved Virgin, whom they call *our Lady*, in allusion to the phrase *our Lord*. Those writers say nothing about the *mother*. It is all about the *Son*. What heretics Luke and the rest of them were! How worthy of being excommunicated! Catholic books are full of the blessed Virgin. The Bible is all about Christ. There is the difference.

But I forgot. The New Testament does record one instance of prayer to a departed saint. The record is in Luke, 16. The saint prayed to was Abraham. The supplicant was a rich man in hell, and he made two requests. Here is the Catholic's authority for this doctrine of praying to deceased saints, so far as he gets it out of the Bible. Let him make the most of it. When, however, he takes into consideration that it was offered from hell, and by a man who lived and died in ignorance and neglect of religion, and that it proved totally unavailing, I suspect he will make no more out of it.

---

23. Specimens of Catholic Idolatry.

I take them from the Catholic book which I have been reviewing, "The Christian's Guide to Heaven."

I did not know, before I read this book, that idolatry was the road to heaven. It did not use to be under the Jewish dispensation. These specimens of Catholic idolatry I think the reader will pronounce, with me, quite up to the average of Pagan idolatry.

Here is one. "We fly to thy patronage, O holy mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers." That is the manner in which devout Catholics in the United States are directed to pray. They fly to Mary, but "God is *our* refuge." There is the difference. They look to her to deliver them from all dangers. I don't know how she can deliver them from all dangers. I think they had better ascertain the powers of the Virgin Mary, before they place such unbounded reliance on her. I should be a very fearful creature, had I none to fly to from danger but her. "What time I am afraid, I will trust in *thee*," (the Lord.) So says the Psalmist, and it is my purpose too.

The next specimen is entitled, "The Salve Regina," and thus it runs: "Hail! holy queen, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee we cry, poor banished sons of Eve; to thee we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thy eyes of mercy towards us, and after this our exile is ended, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus, O clement, O pious, O sweet Virgin Mary." Now, is it not a farce to call this Christianity? It is a great deal more like *atheism*. Here is an authorized Catholic prayer, in which there is no recognition of God whatever!

Then follows a call to devout contemplation, and

one would suppose that the object of it would be God, or the Savior. But no, it is the Virgin. "Let us, with exultation, contemplate the blessed Virgin Mary sitting in glory at the right hand of her beloved Son. She is crowned by the heavenly Father queen of heaven and earth, and appointed by Jesus Christ the dispenser of his graces." It is singular that the Catholics, when they look up to heaven, see no object so conspicuous as the blessed Virgin. Now, she was not the most prominent figure in those visions of heaven of which we have account in the Bible. *Stephen* saw "the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God," but he saw nothing of the Virgin Mary sitting at her Son's right hand. Nor does *John*, in the history he gives in the book of Revelation of his visions of heaven, make any mention of seeing her. But it seems she is not only visible to the contemplative Catholic, but almost alone conspicuous.

They speak of her moreover as crowned universal queen, and appointed dispenser of the graces of Christ. But where did they get that information? It is too much to expect us to take their word for it, since it is acknowledged that we have not the word of God for it. I always supposed Christ to be, through his Spirit, the dispenser of his own graces. I always understood it to be him who "received gifts for men." But it seems, according to the Catholics, that quite a different person received and dispenses them. How much *novelty* there is in the Catholic religion! It is almost all of it comparatively new doctrine. Ours, the Protestant, is the *old* religion, after all that is said to the contrary.

But the Catholic is so positive in regard to the coro-

nation of the blessed Virgin, that we find him using the following thanksgiving, "O Jesus, in union with angels and saints, I bless thee for the glory with which thou hast environed thy holy mother, and I give thee thanks from the bottom of my heart, for having given her to me, for my queen, my protectress and my mother." Here ends the thanksgiving to Jesus. They soon become weary of addressing him, and fondly return to the mother. "O queen of angels and men, grant thy powerful intercession to those who are united to honor thee in the confraternity of the holy rosary," (I don't know what that means; it is a mystery that I must leave unexplained,) "and to all thy other servants." Then follows something to which I solicit particular attention. I suspect the author and approvers of the book would be glad to obliterate the sentence I am going to quote, if they could. But it is too late. The words are these: "I consecrate myself entirely to thy service." Here the person wishing to be guided to heaven is directed, under the authority of the archbishop, to consecrate himself entirely to the service of the Virgin Mary, who is acknowledged on all hands to be a creature. Mark, it is *entirely*. This excludes God altogether from any share in the person's services. He is to be *entirely* consecrated to the service of the Virgin. Will any one, who has any regard for his character as an intelligent being, say that this is not idolatry? There cannot be a plainer case of idolatry made out in any part of the world, or from any portion of history. St. Paul beseeches us to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God, which, he says, is our reasonable service; but this Catholic guide to heaven

directs us to consecrate ourselves entirely to the service of the Virgin Mary.

Accordingly, the docile Catholic does consecrate himself to Mary, as in the following act of devotion to her, which you may read in the same little book: "O blessed Virgin, I come to offer thee my most humble homage, and to implore the aid of thy prayers and protection. Thou art all-powerful with the Almighty. Thou knowest that from my tender years I looked up to thee as my mother, my advocate, and patroness. Thou wert pleased to consider me from that time as one of thy children. I will henceforth serve, honor and love thee. Accept my protestation of fidelity; look favorably on the confidence I have in thee; obtain for me, of thy dear Son, a lively faith; a firm hope; a tender, generous, and constant love, that I may experience the power of thy protection at my death." Here you perceive the Catholic says he will do what "the guide" directs him to do. He will serve her; and so doing, he hopes to experience the power of her protection at his death. Poor soul! I pity him, if he has no better company in death than that. That was not the reason David said, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." His reason was, "for Thou (the Lord, his shepherd) art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." How can Mary be with every dying Catholic who trusts in her? I should like to know. Do they go so far as to say she is omnipresent? Have they *formally* deified her, as *in fact* they have?

The devotee in this prayer uses the following language to the virgin: "Thou art all-powerful with the

Almighty." Shall I call this an *error* or a *falsehood?* It is certain that there is no truth in it. She, a poor sinful creature, like the rest of us, saved by grace, all-powerful with the Almighty in intercession! Christ is that; but no other being is; and to say that any other is, is not only falsehood, but *blasphemy.*

I have other specimens of Catholic idolatry, which I mean to give; but those I have exhibited are sufficient to convict that church of idolatry before any court that ever sat, or any jury that was ever impanneled. *I have* PROVED *the Catholic church and religion to be idolatrous.* I have not merely *asserted* it it has been *demonstrated,* and the proof has been taken from her own authorized publication. To have *said* she was idolatrous, would have been uncharitable. To have *proved* it, is not. A man is responsible for the drift of his assertions, but not for the scope of his arguments.

Idolatrous! Yes, she who pretends to be the only church, is convicted, out of her own mouth, of idolatry. She has this millstone about her neck. I wonder she has *swum* with it so long. It must *sink* her presently. I think I see her *going down* already, although I know many suppose she is rising in the world.

---

23. More Specimens of Catholic Idolatry.

Why, reader, did you know that the Catholics not only *pray* to the Virgin Mary, but *sing* to her? I was

not aware of it until I got hold of the book I have been reviewing. But it is a fact that they do. At the end of the book I find the two following *hymns* addressed to her. They are both in common metre. Here is the *first*. You will see that, in point of idolatry, they are fully up to the prayers to her.

"O holy mother of our God,
"To thee for help we fly;
"Despise not this our humble prayer,
"But all our wants supply.

"O glorious virgin, ever blest,
"Defend us from our foes;
"From threatening dangers set us fre
"And terminate our woes."

Here is the idolatry of looking to a creature for *the supply of all wants*, and of flying to a creature for help and for defence. There is a curse pronounced in Jeremiah, 17 : 5, on the man "that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." If the person who devoutly uses this hymn does not make "flesh his arm," I should like to know who does.

The other hymn runs thus :

"Hail, Mary, queen and virgin pure,
"With every grace replete;
"Hail, kind protectress of the poor,
"Pity our needy state.

"O thou who fill'st the highest place,
"Next heaven's imperial throne;
"Obtain for us each saving grace,
"And make our wants thy own.

"How oft, when trouble filled my breast,
"Or sin my conscience pained,
"Through thee I sought for peace and rest,
"Through thee I peace obtained.

"Then hence, in all my pains and cares,
"I'll seek for help in thee;
"E'er trusting, through thy powerful prayers,
"To gain eternity."

But it seems the blessed Virgin is not the only creature they *sing* to. I find in the same book a hymn to *St. Joseph*, of which the first verse is,

"Holy Patron, thee saluting,
"Here we meet with hearts sincere;
"Blest St. Joseph, all uniting,
"Call on thee to hear our prayer."

Perhaps the reader is aware that the Catholics are not satisfied with praying merely to *animated* beings, they sometimes supplicate things which have no life. Indeed they seem disposed to worship almost every thing, except it be Him whom alone they should worship. To give but one example, I find in "the Litany of the blessed Sacrament," as they call it, among many other similar supplications, this one, "O wheat of the elect, have mercy on us." What a prayer this, to be sanctioned by an archbishop, and sent forth from one of the most enlightened cities of America, and that in the nineteenth century too! It is really too bad. We talk of the *progress* of things. But here is *retrocession* with a witness. In the *first* century the rule was, according to the practice of the publican, to pray "God be merciful to me a sinner;" but now in the

nineteenth, the sinner is directed to say, "O wheat of the elect, have mercy on us!"

I think we have found, with reference to the Catholic religion, what *Archimedes* could not find when he wanted to move the world. He said he could move it, provided he could have a place to stand on, from which he could with his lever act upon the world. But as no such place could be found for him, the world was not moved. I think, however, that I have discovered a spot from which we can not only move, but utterly subvert the Roman Catholic religion. We pass over her absurdity and her intolerance, and plant ourselves on her *idolatry*. Here we will stand, and from this place we will carry on our operations against her. If the Roman Catholic church is idolatrous, can she stand? Must she not fall? What! a church that is plainly idolatrous maintain its ground as the church of Christ! It is impossible. It is but for the eyes of mankind to be opened to see her idolatry, and her reign is over. The common sense of the world cannot long brook prayers and hymns to creatures, and supplications for mercy to that of which bread is made. I would not have it persecuted; I would not have one of its adherents harmed in the slightest degree; but there are some things which the enlightened intellect of man cannot tolerate; and this is the chief of those things which are intolerable to reason. It must go off the stage, even though infidelity should come on and occupy it. The religion that is not of the Bible, and that scoffs at reason, must come to an end. I have no fears of its rising to any higher ascendancy than that it now occupies. My hope is in God; but if it were not, it would be in *man*.

24. Image Worship.

If there be any truth in phrenology, I judge that Catholics must have the organ of veneration very largely developed. There are no people, unless it be some Pagans, who are so inclined to worship. They worship almost every thing that comes in their way, with scarcely any discrimination. The value of worship with them seems to depend on the variety of objects worshiped. What a pity it is they cannot confine their worship within narrower bounds! What a pity they are not satisfied with one object of religious veneration—the great and glorious God! But no. Besides him, they must have a host of creatures, angels, saints, and what not, as objects of adoration. Nor are they satisfied with these beings themselves. They must have visible representations of them to bow down unto, and worship. They want something to worship which they can *see*. In the profession of faith which I find in the little book published in Baltimore under the sanction of the archbishop, from which I have quoted so freely already, and to which I love to appeal, seeing it is published so near home, and there can be no dispute about its authority, I find this paragraph among others: "I most firmly assert, that the *images* of Christ, of the mother of God, ever Virgin, and also of the saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honor and veneration is to be given them." This doctrine sounds a little different from that promulged from Sinai, and written with the finger of God on the tables of stone. They *look* to be at variance, to say the least; and I think I shall be

able to show presently that they have that *aspect* to Catholics as well as Protestants. The voice that shook the earth, after saying, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," said, "Thou shalt not *make* unto thee any graven image, or *any* likeness of any thing that is in heaven above," &c. Now Christ the virgin, and the saints are in heaven above, unless any choose to surmise that some of those reckoned saints are elsewhere. Consequently no likeness of them may be made. The law proceeds: "Thou shalt not *bow down* thyself to them, nor serve them." But do not Catholics bow down or *kneel* before likenesses of the saints and others? I ask the question. I know they used to do so, and I suppose I may infer that they do so now, since it is their grand boast that their religion is *every where and always the same.* The doctrine delivered from Sinai is the old notion on the subject, and it would seem to be against every kind and degree of image worship. But, says the modern "guide to heaven," what the authoritative Council of Trent had said many years before, "the images of Christ, of the mother of God, and also of the saints, ought to be had and retained, and due honor and veneration given them." Here are *Baltimore* and *Trent* against *Sinai;* or, in other words, the archbishop and council on one side, and he who came down on the mountain which burned with fire on the other. My hearers must range themselves on either side, as they see fit.

But cannot the two things be reconciled somehow? Can they not be so *explained* as to remove all appearance of inconsistency? Perhaps they can, if one of them be explained *away*, that is, be made so clear

that you can't see it any longer. This is a new way some have of reconciling things; but I, as an individual, do not think much of it. I like the old way of laying things alongside of each other, and then shedding as much light as possible on both. If this is done with the two things in question, I fear there is no hope of reconciling them. To this conclusion our Catholic brethren themselves seem to have come; and seeing that the two things could not be so explained as to appear in harmony, they have most effectually explained one of them *away*. They have *suppressed* it. The second commandment has been thrown out of the Decalogue, as I have shown on a former occasion. This is a part of the Catholics' "short and easy method with Protestants." It beats Leslie's with the Deists all to nothing. Whether it be as *honest* and *correct* a method, as it is short and easy, I refer to the judgment of my readers. One thing is very certain; the Catholics must think that the old second commandment *is*, or at least *looks* very much against them, otherwise they would not have meddled with it. Can any other reason be given for the suppression of the second commandment, but that it seems to forbid that use which Catholics make of images in their churches? If any body can imagine another reason, I will thank him to state it. Now, where there can be but one motive impelling to an act, I suppose it is not uncharitable to refer the act to that motive.

I believe the reader is aware that, even in the little modern Baltimore book, "the guide to heaven.' the second commandment is suppressed. I think I have stated that fact in a former article. It is so. And

why should it not be? Why should not the *invariable* religion be the same here that it is in Ireland or Italy? Why should American Catholics be bound to keep one more commandment than European Catholics? Why should they of the old countries have greater liberty of action than we of the new world? The circumstances under which the second commandment is omitted in "the guide to," &c. are these. An examination, preparatory to confession, is recommended to the devout Catholic, on the ten commandments, that he may see, before he goes to the priest to get forgiveness, wherein he has transgressed any of them. Now, he is not directed to examine himself on the second, but *twice over* on the tenth, so as to make out the full number. Now I acknowledge it would have been awkward to have set the person to examining himself in reference to the second commandment. It might have led to a conviction of sins not recognized by his confessor. If he had asked himself, "is there any graven image, or likeness of any thing in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, to which I bow down?" himself would have been apt to answer, "Why yes, there is that image of Christ I kneel before—and there is that likeness of the blessed Virgin I bow down to and adore—I am afraid I have broken the second commandment." If then he had gone to the priest with his scruples, you see it would have made work and trouble. It is true, the priest could have said to him, "O, my child, you don't mean any thing by it. You only use the image as a help to devotion. Your worship does not terminate on it. Your worship of it is only *relative*. Besides, you don't *adore* the image—you only *venerate* it—

and you only give "*due* honor and veneration" to images—nothing more than that. You should consider, my child, the distinction between adoration and veneration—and also between *latria* and *dulia*." But this might not have satisfied the person's conscience. It might have been all *Greek* to him. Wherefore it was judged most prudent not to recommend any examination on the commandment about images. Perhaps it was the more prudent course. The *policy* of the measure I do not dispute.

But, say the Catholics, have not Protestants their pictures and statues? Certainly we have. We do not make war against the fine arts. We can approve of *painting* and *statuary* without practicing *idolatry*. Yes, we have representations of deceased Christians, but we do not kneel before them, nor do we on that account drop the second commandment, as some do. The Catholics make a great many explanations and distinctions on this subject of image worship, some of which I have adverted to above, in what I have supposed the priest to say. But they are substantially the same that the ancient Israelite might have made, and the modern Pagan makes in justification of himself. Idolaters, when called upon to explain themselves, have always been in the habit of saying that it was only a *relative* worship they paid to the visible object, and that the adoration was meant to pass through and terminate on an invisible object beyond. This explanation is not original with the modern Christian idolater. It is as old as Jewish and Pagan idolatry. The worshipers of the golden calf worshiped something *beyond* the calf. The calf was only a help to devotion, and they only paid "due

honor and veneration" to it. Nevertheless they "sinned a great sin," and "the Lord plagued the people" on account of it. "There fell of the people that day about 3,000." I suppose it would have been just the same had they made ever so many explanations. But their explanations were not waited for. What signifies all these explanations and distinctions to the great mass of the Catholic laity? They do not even understand them; and it seems that if they both understood and regarded them, it would not help the matter. It is this very explained and qualified worship which the commandment forbids.

I have nothing more to say about images, but I wish the Archbishop of Baltimore would allow the second commandment to appear in the next edition of "the Guide to Heaven." I wish he would let the publisher's stereotype plates be altered so as to conform to the tables of stone. I am afraid the people will not get to heaven if they have not respect to *all* God's commandments. The Psalmist seems to have thought that necessary. Ps. 119: 6. It would gratify me much, if the archbishop would permit the Lord to say to his people *all* he has to say.

---

25. Relics.

My last was on the subject of images. Here are some more things to which the Catholics, if they do not exactly worship them, pay a respect and veneration which is very apt to run into worship. They are

relics, so called. I have just come from the dictionary where I went to find the word. I consulted Cruden's Concordance first, but I found no such word there. That contains only the words which are used in the Bible. Relics came in fashion after the Bible was written. In those old times they were not in the habit of mutilating the bodies and disturbing the bones of the pious dead. They respected the remains of the departed by letting them alone, as king Josiah ordered the people to do in the case of the bones of the two prophets. They were going to disturb them, but he told them to let them alone, 2 Kings, 23: 18. This is the way in which Protestants respect the remains of the dead. It is rather queer that Catholics, in the lack of other scripture to support their doctrine of relics, appeal to this, and they will have it that Josiah, like themselves, entertained a great respect for relics. The reference to that passage must be on the principle of *lucus, a non lucendo*, [light from no light.] I cannot account for it in any other way.

By the way, I did not even find relics in the concordance to the Apocrypha. But Johnson has it. A dictionary, you know, takes in all words. I find the general signification of the word to be *remains*. In the Catholic church it is used to designate "the remains of the bodies, or clothes, of saints or martyrs, and the instruments by which they were put to death, devoutly preserved, in honor to their memory;—kissed, revered, and carried in procession." This is the best definition of relics I can any where find. I am indebted for it to the Encyclopedia. But it is not a perfect definition. There are some things preserved and revered as relics which don't exactly fall under

it; as, for example, the rope with which Judas hanged himself, and the tail of Balaam's ass, both of which are kept and shown as relics.

But it may be asked if relics are not out of date. The inquirer should know that nothing ever gets out of date with the Catholics. *Always and every where the same* is their boast respecting their religion. Besides, in the Baltimore publication, "the Guide to Heaven," notice is taken of relics. It says that the saints are to be honored and invocated, and that their relics are to be respected. Well, and where is the harm of respecting relics? I might retaliate and ask where is the use—what is the good of it? They must think that devotion is promoted by these relics. But I cannot see how the spirit of devotion is to be promoted by contemplating St. Joseph's axe and saw, or the comb of the Virgin Mary, or even the finger of St. Ann. If a person even knows that he is handling a piece of the identical wood of the cross, it does not occur to me how that is to enkindle the flame of piety in his heart. The ancient method of exciting the glow of devotion was quite different. It was by meditation on spiritual subjects. It was while the Psalmist was *musing*, that "the fire burned" within him. But it seems the Catholics come to the same thing by the aid of their relics. Well, if devotion is kindled by relics, towards whom does it flame? Towards the saints, to be sure, whose relics they are. These remains can only remind them of those to whom they once belonged. So that it is the religious veneration of saints, not the worship of Jehovah, that is promoted by relics. All that can be said for them is, that they serve the cause of idolatry.

But I have been writing as if these relics were genuine remains of the saints—the saw they show really St. Joseph's, and the finger St. Ann's. The reader must excuse me for indulging such a supposition. The very idea of such things being preserved, and transmitted through eighteen centuries, is preposterous. Their own writers acknowledge that many of them are spurious—that bones are often consecrated, which, so far from belonging to saints, probably did not belong to Christians, if indeed to human beings. If this be so, how are we to know which are genuine? There can be no internal evidence to distinguish them. The bones of saints must look just like other bones. I know it is said there is an odor about the genuine relics which does not belong to the remains of the vulgar dead. How that is I cannot say. I understand that, in the failure of the ordinary, external evidence, the Pope takes it on him to pronounce them genuine. This is making short work of it. But some of the authorities of the church of Rome go so far as to say that it is not necessary the relics should be genuine. It is enough that the worshiper has an intention of honoring the saints whose bones he supposes them to be. If this is correct doctrine, churches and chapels may be readily furnished with relics, and the defect in this particular, which Catholics deplore in regard to many of their establishments, be supplied without going farther than the nearest graveyard.

If any one should still think that the relics may be genuine, there is a consideration which, if I mistake not, will carry complete conviction to his mind. It is, that there are altogether *too many* of these relics, so that some of them must be spurious. Five devout pil-

grims happening to meet on their return from Rome found, on comparing their notes, that each had been honored with a foot of the very ass upon which Christ rode to Jerusalem. Here were five feet for one animal. Moreover, it is said that there are as many pieces of the timber of the true cross in different parts of Europe, as would supply a town with fuel for a winter!

But, say they, were not the bones of Joseph preserved, and afterwards removed to Canaan. Undoubtedly they were. But they were all kept together in a coffin, and they were removed, not to be worshiped, but to be buried. Joseph, being persuaded that God would visit his people, and bring them out of Egypt into Canaan, enjoined it on them to take his remains along with them, for he wished them to repose in the land of promise. What this has to do with relics I have not the discernment to perceive. How it bears any resemblance to the Catholic practice of disturbing coffins and separating bone from bone, and cherishing them as things to be revered, I cannot see. Yet no less a character than Cardinal Bellarmine appeals to this fact in support of their doctrine of relics. So also they cite the case recorded in 2 Kings, 13: 21, of the dead man that was revived by coming in contact with the bones of Elisha. But how does this favor relics? The bones of Elisha were quietly reposing in the place where they were laid at his death. Not one of them had been touched. But if relics had been in vogue then, do you suppose the remains of such an eminent saint as Elisha would have been left undisturbed?

I was surprised to find that Bellarmine refers to

Deut. 34: 6, in support of relics. It is that remarkable passage in which the Lord is said to have buried Moses in a valley in the land of Moab, and that no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. I suppose the cardinal would have us infer from this, that if the place of Moses' body had been known, it would have been dug up and converted into relics. And therefore the Lord took care it should not be known. The devil, it seems, from Jude, 5: 9, contended for it for some such purpose as this, but he was foiled. The reference to this passage strikes me as rather an unhappy one.

But were not handkerchiefs and aprons brought from the body of Paul, and miracles thereby wrought? Yes, but they were not relics. Paul was living. Besides, who does not see that those articles of dress were but *signs* to connect the miracles, in the minds of the people, with the person of God's inspired ambassador? Was any honor due to them? Do we hear of their being preserved and revered? No. I do not find them in any list of relics. They passed again immediately into their former appropriate use as handkerchiefs and aprons. Finally, they appeal to the efficacy of the shadow of Peter, as related, Acts, 5: 15, in proof of the virtue of relics. But as there appears to be no *substance* in this argument, I leave it unanswered; and have only to add, that I wonder not that infidels abound so in Catholic countries, when Christianity is held up before them as embracing and even giving prominence to such doctrines as the veneration of relics, the invocation of saints, and many more like them.

26. Seven Sacraments.

What! Seven! How is this? I read in the Bible of only *two*. Whence have they the other *five*? O, they come from the other source of Christian doctrine, *tradition*. They were *handed* down. It is true, the apostles *wrote* of only two sacraments; but Catholics would have us believe that they *preached* and *conversed* about five others: and those that heard them spoke of these sacraments to others; and they to others still; and so the story passed from lip to lip, until the Council of Trent, I believe it was, concluded that something had better be written about these five *extra* sacraments. I wonder that was never thought of before. It is surprising that it never occurred to the apostles, when they were writing their Epistles, to say a syllable about these *seven* sacraments. It would seem to have been very thoughtless in them. I may be very hard to please, but I cannot help feeling a desire to have *Scripture*, as well as *unwritten tradition*, in support of a doctrine or practice called Christian. I like to be able to trace a doctrine all the way back to the Bible, and to find it originating in the very oracles of God themselves. Some think it sufficient, if they can follow a doctrine back as far as the earlier fathers; and especially if they can trace it to the Epistles of Ignatius. But this does not satisfy me. There are certain other Epistles, rather more ancient, in which I would like to find the doctrine. Ignatius was a very good man, but he did not belong to the days of Paul by any means. Ignatius, Clemens, and all those good fathers, stood on the bank of the stream, but Paul and

his associates sat around the fountain. These last saw truth in its rise; the others only saw it in its flow. True, they were *near* the source, but they were not *at* it; and who knows not that a stream may be corrupted very near its source? If I live eighteen or nineteen miles distant from a certain fountain, whose stream passes by my residence, and I want to know whether its waters have been corrupted, do I trace back the stream until I come within a mile or two of the fountain, and there stop, concluding that such as the water is there, such it must be at the spring? Do I not rather go all the way up to the fountain? Which ought I to do? It strikes me as very strange, that any should suspend their search after truth a century or two this side of the Bible era. I think they should go all the way back to the Bible.

But I am wandering from my subject, which is the sacraments. What are those other *five?* One is *marriage.* What! marriage a sacrament! How does it answer to the definition of sacrament? What spiritual thing is signified by it? Marriage is said to be "honorable in all," but nothing is said of its being a sacrament. If it be a sacrament, why are not priests, as well as others, permitted to *take* this sacrament? Why should the universal clergy be debarred the privilege of this holy thing? Does its *sacred* character render it unsuitable to those who fill the sacred office?

The other day I was thinking—for, being a Protestant, I *dare* think even on religion—and this thought occurred to me: "Is it possible that God has denied the whole body of the clergy, of all nations and ages, the privilege of knowing how he pitieth them that fear him; and of approaching to the experimental know-

ledge of his exceeding readiness to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him—the privilege, in other words, of being able to feel the force of some of the most touching representations which he has made of his dispositions towards his creatures, founded on the parental relation?" I read in the Bible that "like *as a father* pitieth his children, *so* the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Now, can it be sinful for a minister of Jesus Christ to know by experience (the only way in which it can be fully known) how a father pitieth, and how, consequently, the Lord pitieth his people? I think it is man, and not God, that constitutes this a sin. Again, does God make this general appeal to his creatures, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, *how much more* shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him!"—and has he at the same time excluded a large class of his creatures from the privilege of ever knowing how well disposed parents are to bestow good things on their children? And has he laid under this ban the very persons whom he has appointed to represent and testify of him to men? Has he appealed to the parental feelings of his creatures, and then forbidden a large and important class of them to know what those feelings are? This is rather more than I can believe.

A minister of Jesus Christ may decline the privilege of marriage in his own case—he may not *use that power*, as Paul, in his peculiar circumstances, did not, and as many a *Protestant* minister does not. This is one thing; but has God cut off the whole order of the clergy from even the *right* to marry? That is the question. And that is a very different thing.

27. Transubstantiation.

Because Christ says, in reference to the bread, "This is my body," the Catholics contend that the bread is changed into the body of Christ; and this they call Transubstantiation. And when we say that the passage is not to be interpreted *literally*, but that the bread is merely indicated as the representative of Christ's body, they reply with wonderful confidence, "Ah, but does he not say it *is* his body—does he say it *represents* his body merely—what authority have Protestants to bring in a figure here?" Now let *me* be heard. I have no disposition to ridicule the doctrine of Transubstantiation, especially as it professes to be founded on Scripture. I would give always a candid hearing to the claims of a doctrine which even *seems* to be held out of respect to the authority of the Bible. But I must say that the Catholic does not carry his veneration for the Scriptures far enough; or he is not consistent in his interpretation of them. I think I can show that, to be consistent with himself, he should believe in many more than one Transubstantiation. Let him turn to Luke, 22 : 19, 20. He reads in verse 19, "This is my body." Therefore, he reasons, the bread becomes the body of Christ. Very well. But read verse 20; "This cup *is* the new testament." Here is another Transubstantiation. The cup or chalice becomes the new testament. It is no longer *gold* or *silver*, but a testament or *will!* Does not Christ say it *is* the new testament? What right have *Catholics* to bring in a *figure* here? *The cup is a will*—Christ says so. To be sure, if it were carried to a probate office it

would be thought out of place, and an article for a silversmith to prove, rather than a judge of probate. But no matter for that. What if the senses do tell you that it is still a cup, and the body still bread, will you believe those liars, the senses? But if they are such liars as this would make them out to be, why should I ever believe them—why should I believe them, when they tell me that I see in the Bible those words: "This is my body?" That testimony of the senses the Catholic believes; but if they lie about the body, still declaring it is bread, after it has ceased to be any such thing, why may they not lie in regard to the letters which spell "this is my body." Under the appearance of these letters there may be something quite different, even as, under the appearance of bread in the Eucharist, is the body of Christ, as the Catholics affirm!

But these are not the only instances of Transubstantiation. The Bible is full of them. I find two cases of this *change* recorded in Revelation, 1 : 20; *one* in which certain stars become angels, and another in which certain candlesticks become churches. Do you doubt it? Read for yourself: "The seven stars *are* the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest, *are* the seven churches." The construction here is precisely similar to "this *is* my body." Christ is the speaker in each case, and he says the stars *are* angels, and the candlesticks *are* churches. Who has any right to imagine a *figure* here?

Perhaps every body does not know that Transubstantiation is an Old Testament doctrine. But, according to this mode of interpretation, it is St. Paul, in 1 Cor. 10 : 4, alluding to the rock which Moses

smote in the wilderness, says, "That rock *was* Christ"—not it *represented*, but it *was* Christ! Away with your figures.

Many other examples of Transubstantiation might be given from the Old Testament. Let two remarkable cases suffice, of which we have an account in Genesis, 41 : 26, 27: "The seven good kine are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years," &c. Here seven cows and seven ears of corn are changed into seven years of three hundred and sixty-five days each!

I suppose I might find many hundred examples of these Transubstantiations. Now, does the Catholic believe in all of them? He ought, most undoubtedly he ought, on the same reason that he believes in one. Let him then either believe in them all, or else never adduce, "this *is* my body," in proof of the Transubstantiation held in his church. I wish Mr. H. or some body else would set me right, if I err in this argument.

---

28. Half a Sacrament.

Half a sacrament! Who ever heard of such a thing? A sacrament divided! Yes, even so. The authorities of the Roman Catholic church, Pope, Council, &c. have divided the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which our Savior instituted the same night in which he was betrayed; and, ever since the Council of Constance, they have allowed the people only half of it.

They have told them that they must put up with the bread, for that they want the cup for themselves. But did not Christ give the cup, in the original institution of the sacrament, to as many as he gave the bread? Yes, *Christ* did. So say Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul. He took the cup, they tell us, and gave it to them; and Matthew adds that he said in giving it, "Drink ye *all* of it." Let not this be omitted by any disciple. It would seem as if Christ foresaw what the Constance Council was going to do, and therefore said, "Drink ye *all* of it." Rome might with more plausibility have denied her laity the other half of the sacrament—the bread. After the command to take the cup, there follows the reason; observe it: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for *many*, for the remission of sins." Now the Catholics say that only priests were present on that occasion, and that the giving of the cup to them can be no precedent for giving it to the laity. But, though we should admit that they were at that time priests, I want to know if the reason for partaking of the cup does not apply to others besides the clergy. Was not the blood shed for the laity as well as for the clergy? And if this is the reason why any should partake, it is equally a reason why all should for whom the blood was shed. The precept and privilege to drink is co-extensive with the reason annexed to it. Now I have not been in the habit of regarding the propitiatory death of Christ as a part of the *benefit of clergy*—as one of the peculiar privileges of the priesthood. I object therefore to the restriction of the cup of blessing to the clergy. The symbol of the blood shed for many, for the remission of sins, I claim to be my privilege as truly as that of any priest.

Christ did not shed his blood for the sons of Levi alone.

Yes, Christ gave it in both kinds—and what is more, the Catholics themselves acknowledge that he did, and that the primitive church administered it in both kinds, yet (*hoc tamen non obstante* are their very words) they appoint that the people shall receive it but in one kind, that is, notwithstanding Christ and the primitive church. And they declare them accursed who teach or practice otherwise. What is this but *anathematizing* Christ? But surely they must have something to say in justification of their conduct in this respect. To be sure they have. Do you not know that the Pope is the head of the church, and that he is infallible; or if he is not, yet the *firm* Pope & Co. are? Yes, but there was Pope *Gelasius*, who lived a good while before. He having heard of some Manicheans who received the bread without the wine, decided that such a dividing of one and the same sacrament might not be done without a heinous sacrilege. Was not he head of the church too, and was not he infallible? If he was not, I wonder how he could transmit infallibility.

This withholding of the cup is one of the *boldest strokes* of that church. I cannot help admiring the *courage* it manifests. Who would have thought it could have succeeded so well? I wonder they even undertook to carry this point. However, they have done it. There was some murmuring against it, to be sure. *Huss* and *Jerome* made a noise about it, but they just *burnt* them, and they made no more noise about it.

But are not Christians *followers*, that is, *imitators* of Christ? O yes. But this withholding of the cup is not doing like Christ. The Catholics say that Christ

is with their church to the *end* of time. It strikes me, however, that he could not have been with them at that point in the progress of time when the Council of Constance sat.

I do not know what others think, but for my own part I don't believe that any power on earth has a right to limit a grant of Jesus Christ, or, in other words, to take away what he has given. He said of the cup, "drink ye *all* of it"—and I, for one, will do it, and I think *all* ought—and if the Catholics will come over to us, they too shall have the cup of salvation. O, if I had the ear of the Catholics now, I would not ask them to confess their sins to me, but there is a thing I would tell them: I would say, My dear Catholic brethren, you never remember Christ in his sacrament. You only *half* remember him. He said, eat *and* drink in remembrance of me. You only do one. You do not *show* the Lord's death; for Paul says, "as often as ye eat this bread *and* drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death." It is only they who do *both* that make this exhibition. Christ's death is not shown by the bread merely, but by both the elements. I know your church says that the blood is in the body, and that, in taking one, both are taken, for that "Christ was entire and truly under each kind," as the council decrees. But how came Christ himself to know nothing of this? Did he do a superfluous thing in giving the cup? What if the blood is in the body, and the bread being changed into the body, we take the one in taking the other we want the blood *separated* from the body, the blood *shed*. The blood of Christ is not an atonement for sin, except as it is shed. Catholics, you

never celebrate the Lord's Supper. In the Lord's Supper there was a *cup*. In yours there is none. You hold that the discourse in John, 6, relates to an atonement, and there it is written, "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Now, according to his own principles, you have no life in you, for you do not *drink* his blood. The most you can be said to do is, that you eat it in connection with his body! One thing more, Catholic brethren. There can be no such thing in reality as half a sacrament. To divide a sacrament is to destroy it. What follows then, but that the *whole* sacrament is taken from you! Look at this—just fix your mind five minutes on this subject, and you are, I do not say what, but you are no longer a Catholic. *Five minutes.* That is all. But you say, I must not *doubt;* yet you may *think*, and God the judge will never condemn you for exercising your mind.

---

29. Extreme Unction.

When it looks as if one was going to die, then by all means let the priest be sent for: and when he has come, let him receive the dying man's confession, (but if the priest should be long in coming, I would advise him to confess to God. I think it would answer as well. Indeed I prefer that near way to pardon, to the other circuitous route)—and let him then in that extremity anoint him with oil! This is *extreme unction*

—a sacrament—one of the *seven!* I think they must have been at a loss to make up the seven, when they pressed this into the service.

There don't seem to be a great deal of religion in it; nor indeed any excess of common sense. But to speak of it as constituting a preparation for death is really shocking. What! a preparation for dying, and for meeting and answering to God, procured by the intervention and unction of a human priest—done by oil! Truly this is an easy way of getting to heaven, particularly where priests are plenty. I do not wonder that the Catholic religion is *popular*. This is indeed prophesying *smooth* things. We Protestants have no such doctrine to preach. When we are called to see a sick person, we candidly acknowledge that there is nothing *we* can do for him which shall infallibly secure his salvation. We tell him what *he* must do: that he must repent and believe in Christ: and then we ask God to undertake and do for him. It is only on certain conditions that we can assure him of his salvation. The priests say that they can *insure* the person's salvation; but to any such power as that we do not pretend.

But have not the Catholics plain Scripture for their doctrine of extreme unction? If they have; if it is *written*, and not merely *handed down*, then I am at once a believer in it. Let us see: they adduce two passages in support of their dogma, Mark, 6 : 13, and James, 5 : 14. The first is *historical*. It affirms that the apostles "anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them." The other is *hortatory*. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him

with oil in the name of the Lord," that is, doing what the apostles are represented by Mark as having done; and doing it, as appears from the next verse, with the same end in view, viz. *healing*. Now, what authority for the sacrament of extreme unction is there here? Here is indeed an anointing with oil by an ecclesiastic. But who does not see in how many particulars, and how widely this anointing differs from the extreme unction of the Catholics? Their anointing proceeds on the supposition that the person is going to die; and could his recovery be foreseen, it would be omitted. But the anointing practised by the apostles and elders of the church was in order to the recovery of the person, and was in every case connected with his recovery. Their anointing was the *attendant* and *token* of a miraculous cure. It held precisely the same place with Christ's making clay of spittle, and anointing therewith the eyes of the blind man; or with Naaman's being directed to go and wash seven times in Jordan. It was, like each of these, an external, and in itself inefficacious sign of a miraculous recovery; and even now there is no objection to the use of the sign, if the thing signified is to be expected. Let the priests anoint with abundance of oil all their sick, if they can accompany that unction with such a prayer of faith as shall save the sick. But if the miraculous recoveries have ceased, let there be a doing away of the sign. As soon as any sign becomes *insignificant*, let it cease to be used. Extreme unction is now a sign of *nothing*. There was no use in going down into the pool of Bethesda after the angel had ceased to pay his periodical visit to it. So in this case, there being now no healing, there need be, and there should be, no anointing.

How the priests now differ in their use of the oil from those whose successors they pretend to be! The apostles and elders anointed persons with a view to their living; but the priests with a view to their *dying*. The former would not anoint, if they foresaw the person was to die; the latter will not, if they foresee that he is to live. How at odds they are! How Scripture and tradition do quarrel! And the worst of it is, there is no such thing as bringing about a reconciliation between them.

Among the doctrines of the Catholic church, I am at a loss whether to give the palm to this or to purgatory. Purgatory teaches the doctrine of salvation by *fire*. Extreme unction, the doctrine of salvation by *oil*. There does not seem to be much Christianity in either. Extreme unction is, however, the *smoothest* doctrine. Decidedly so. Jesus Christ came by *water* and *blood*. The salvation he proclaims is by *these;* and the sacraments he instituted, are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. These signify something: the first, *regeneration;* the second, the *propitiation* made for our sins.

---

30. Doing Penance.

Insufferable! What? Why, that the Catholic translators of the Bible should render the Greek word, which signifies *repentance*, (*metanoia,*) by the phrase *doing penance!* I would not willingly be uncharitable, imputing a bad motive where a good one might have

been present. But I must say that I know not how to reconcile this rendering of *metanoia* with their integrity as translators. I cannot help believing that they knew better. Could they have supposed that they were selecting the most judicious method of conveying the mind of the Spirit as expressed in that word, when they concluded on rendering it *doing penance?* Why, in the name of common sense, did they use *two* English words (coining one of them moreover for the occasion) to convey the meaning of *one* Greek word? Was there any necessity for it? Was there no single English word that would express the sense? There was *repentance*, the word adopted by the translators of the common English Bible. What objection lay to the use of that? Why was that passed by; and especially why was it passed by in order to give a preference to such a phrase as doing penance? If they had disliked repentance, they might with more propriety have employed the word *reformation.* It would seem as if they were anxious to avoid the use of any word which expressed or implied either *sorrow* or *amendment*, and therefore they fixed on the phrase *doing penance.* I am mistaken if these translators have not a heavy account to give. This single rendering, if it were the only exceptionable one, would be as a millstone about the neck of that translation. Just think of the false impression, and that on a point of the highest moment, made on the minds of so many millions by this one egregiously erroneous version.

Contemplate the state of the case. God, in prospect of the judgment day, and by the terror of it, commands all men every where to do a certain thing, Acts, 17: 30, 31; and Christ says that except they

do it, they shall perish. Luke, 13: 3. This thing God expresses by the Greek term *metanoia*. But all do not understand Greek. Wherefore, for the admonition and instruction of those Catholics who read only the English language, and who cannot be persuaded of the sin of reading the Bible, it becomes necessary to render that word into English. Certain persons undertake to do it, that is, to interpret the mind of God as expressed by *metanoia*. And what do they make it out to mean? Hear, hear! *Doing penance!* That is it, they say. "Do the penance which your priest appoints, after you have made your confession to him, and that is all." It is no such thing. This is a misrepresentation of the Almighty. This is not the subject of the command and warning to which reference has been made. And to suppose that it is on account of this that angels rejoice, i. e. when a sinner does penance, is truly farcical. O what a translation! "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that does penance." Truly angels must be easily made to rejoice, if this be the case! How it sounds! How offensive to the very ear, and how much more to the enlightened judgment, is this rendering! "God commands all to do penance. Except ye do penance, ye shall all likewise perish. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should *return to penance!*" Shocking! Away with such a translation from the earth. The *Douay* Bible is not God's Bible; for it *purposely* misrepresents him in a main point, viz: on the article of repentance. Here is a translation of *metanoia* implying *no sorrow for sin, no change of mind*, (which the word literally signifies,) *nor any moral reformation;* but only the doing of certain ex-

ternal, and generally puerile, things prescribed by a priest; all which may be done without any internal exercise—without any emotion of any kind. The word, according to the Catholics, makes no requisition on the *heart* whatever. And truly, a man may be a good Catholic without ever *feeling* any thing, unless it be the bodily pain of self-inflicted penance. And every one knows that *thinking* is not necessary to constitute a good Catholic. Wherefore a man may be a good Catholic without either *thinking or feeling*, that is, without any exercise of either mind or heart. All that seems requisite is mechanical *action*. *Maelzel*, the constructor of automatons, could almost make one. Is this uncharitable? It is *true*, and ought to be said. It ought to be known and proclaimed that the religion of the church of Rome *overlooks the reason, conscience, and heart of man*, addressing no appeal to them, and indeed making no use of them. Is it then the religion of the Holy Ghost? Is this the Christianity of Christ? It cannot be.

I ought perhaps to say that I find, in one place in the Douay Testament, the Greek *metanoeite* translated correctly, *repent*. It occurs in Mark 1: 15. Whether it was done in a moment of relenting, or through inadvertence, I cannot say. It was never repeated tha I can find. Perhaps the translators had to do penance for presuming to render the word in that one case correctly.

Do you not see what a difference it makes to the priests, if you give it out that *repentance* is the requisition? Then a sinner will be saved if he repent, irrespective of the priest. The *great High* Priest that is passed into the heavens will see to the case of every true

penitent. But if the requisition be *doing penance*, in that case, there being something necessary which the priest prescribes, he has the poor sinner completely in his power. It makes the salvation to depend on the act of the *little low* priest. Do you wonder that the priests insist on the translation *do penance*, and forbid the people to read in a Bible which requires them to *repent?*

There is a precious note in the Douay connnected with this subject, which may afford me a topic hereafter.

---

31. The Hardest Religion.

Among the compliments which our brethren of the Church of Rome pay to their religion, this is one. They say it is the *hardest* religion—that no other religion requires so much of its votary. Hence they would have it inferred that theirs must be the divine and only true religion. The yoke being so hard, and the burden so heavy, they must of course be Christ's.

I shall examine this claim to the precedence in point of difficulty. And something I am prepared to concede to the Church of Rome on this score. There is a part of her *faith* which I acknowledge it is exceedingly hard to receive. It requires a powerful effort doubtless to believe the doctrine of transubstantiation, viz. that the bread and wine of the sacrament are changed into * * * what? The body and blood of Christ? Not

that alone, but also into his *soul and divinity!* Yes, it is hard to *believe* it is so, when one *sees* it is not so, and *knows* it cannot be so. It is hard to disbelieve at will those long-tried and faithful servants, the senses; and especially that first of the five, the sight. There is *difficulty* in the Catholic religion truly. It puts a tremendous strain on the mind.

There is also her doctrine about the necessity of baptism to salvation, which some of us find it very hard to believe. One reason of our difficulty is that that doctrine bears so hard upon the heathen, and particularly on the immense multitude of infants who every where die without baptism. According to the doctrine of Rome, that baptism is indispensable to salvation, they are all lost just for the want of a little water! Poor things, they fare no better than the thief on the cross who died without baptism. They get no farther than Paradise the first day. It *is* a hard religion. This doctrine is cruelly hard upon *children;* as her doctrine that money, by the purchase of prayers and masses, releases souls from Purgatory, is hard upon the *poor.*

So much for the difficulty of her *faith.* But *all* of that is not so hard; as for example, her doctrine of *indulgences.* It is never hard to be *indulged.* There is no hardship, but very great convenience for a delinquent sinner to have such a bank to draw upon, as the accumulated merits of the saints in by-gone ages, who did more than they needed for their own salvation, having loved God with considerably more than "all the heart, and soul, and strength, and mind!" *This* doctrine does not make the Roman Catholic religion a hard one—neither does the doctrine of *venial sins.* You know they hold that there are some sins whose

wages is not death. They are excusable—mere peccadillos. *We* recognise no such sins. We think with St. Paul, that "cursed is every one that continueth not in *all* things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

But perhaps when the Catholics speak of their religion as a hard one, they refer not so much to its faith as to its *practice*. It is what they have to *do* that is so hard. But why do they speak of it as hard? It looks as if it was a task to them—as if they do not find their sweetest and purest delight in it. It would appear as if they did not esteem the service of God as much their privilege as their duty. One would suppose, to hear them talk, that the commandments of God are grievous. I am truly sorry for them that Christ's yoke, which, he says, is easy, they find to be so *galling* to them. We, Protestants, never think of speaking of our religion as hard. "Wisdom's ways" we find to be "pleasantness, and all her paths peace." Our language is: "O how love I thy law! How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" But it seems not to be so with Catholics. I have been struck with surprise to hear even the most devout of them speak of the requirements of their religion as things which they *must* comply with. "I must," is the language which they use in reference to almost every thing of a religious kind that they do. I have thought with myself how it is possible that their hearts can be in their religion, if they esteem it such a hardship. How will heaven be able to make them happy, if the exercises and acts on earth, most akin to those of heaven, are so irksome that they engage in them only from sheer necessity?

But I must advert to some of the hard practices which the Catholic religion requires of her votaries. There is that practice of confessing to the priest. Is not that hard! Truly it is. I think I should find it hard to tell every thing, even the most secret thoughts, to any body called a priest. And then to have to perform whatever penance he might please to prescribe. Yes, it is hard—so hard, and so absurd too that God has never required it at our hands. He says to the sinner, come right to me with your broken heart, and make your confession to me, for he is "in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

Again, *fasting* is reckoned among the hard things of the Catholic religion—and indeed it is hard not to eat when one is hungry. But that is not their idea of fasting. Their idea of fasting is in accordance with what St. Paul says to Timothy in his prediction concerning them, an "*abstaining from meats*," or "whatsoever is sold in the shambles." Now there is nothing so very hard in that restriction. He must be very difficult who cannot satisfy his appetite out of all the variety of the vegetable kingdom, when he has moreover the liberty of the entire fish market.

But there is one thing about the Catholic religion in view of which I suppose I must admit it to be the *hardest* religion. It belongs strictly neither to *faith* nor *practice*. You will guess that I have in my mind—*Purgatory*. Now, as a *doctrine*, there are many things about it hard to be believed, as, for example, that material fire should be able to act on an immaterial spirit, and thereby purify it too. But hard as purgatory is to be *believed*, it is still harder to be *suffered*. Yes, it is

hard, after having gone through the whole routine of the sacraments, and lived long a good Catholic, then to die, and go into an intense fire. It is so hard that I, for my part, prefer the religion of poor Lazarus, whom the angels took straight to heaven; and of the penitent malefactor, who spent a part of the day on which he died, in Paradise. By the way, St. Paul could not have been thinking of Purgatory when he said, "to me to die is *gain*." But I forget that he lived before the time of the Catholic religion.

---

32. More about Penance.

Let us hear both sides. In my former article on this subject, I objected to the translation *doing penance*, in the Douay Bible. But have the Catholics nothing to say in justification of their rendering? I suppose that whatever they have to say is expressed in a certain note on Matthew, 3: 2. "Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," is the edifying translation of the passage. Our attention is then directed to this note, "agite pœnitentiam, metanoeite," which word, according to the use of the Scriptures and the holy fathers, does not only signify repentance and amendment of life, but also "punishing past sins by fasting and such like penitential exercises." This is the sage note.

Now here is an acknowledgment that the ideas of *repentance* and *amendment* are intended in the ori-

ginal word. Why then is a translation of it adopted, which excludes both repentance and amendment. If the original includes them, yet their translation does not. A man may do penance, and yet neither repent nor amend—neither be sorry nor better. These translators must have thought that repentance and amendment, though included in the original word, were of little importance, otherwise they would not have suppressed them in their translation. They must have judged them too insignificant to be taken notice of in their standard version! As for us Protestants, we think that *to be sorry* and *to reform* are very important parts of repentance.

But, besides repentance and amendment, they say the original word signifies "punishing past sins, by fasting," &c. This is their assertion. Where are their proofs? I would like to see some of them, for the dictionaries tell us another story. Well, they appeal to the Scriptures and the fathers, "according to the use of the Scriptures and the holy fathers." Here are two authorities, though of very unequal weight in my estimation. I wish these translators had said where the Scriptures use this word in their sense. I suppose they would, if they had been able. The truth is, the word is never so used. It does not include this idea of theirs. *Punishing!* Repentance don't mean punishing. *Punishing past sins!* This is no very eligible phrase. It is quite too figurative for an explanatory note. And punishing them, how? *By fasting.* How does fasting punish sin? I cannot see how any fasting punishes sin; but I am sure the Catholic fasting does not. Do you know what Catholics mean by fasting? Not abstaining from food. No, to

be sure. But changing their kind of food. Only abstain from *meats*, according to the prediction, 1 Tim. 4: 3, and you may eat what else you please. Fasting, according to the opinions held by Catholics in the region of country where I live, and I suppose it is so elsewhere, consists in reducing one's self down to the low diet of *fish*, (after all their kinds,) *eggs*, *oysters*, *terrapins*, with all manner of *vegetables*, and every variety of *desert!* That is fasting, because there is no butchers' meat eaten. You may eat what is sold anywhere else but in the shambles. Now I cannot see any thing very *punitive* in *such* fasting. A man's sin must be exceedingly sensitive to feel the infliction of such abstinence. I do not believe that sin is to be *starved* out of the soul in this way.

It is well enough sometimes to try the value of an explanation upon a passage in which the thing explained occurs, as for example, "God now commandeth all men every where to punish their past sins by fasting and such like penitential exercises." How does that sound? Do you really think that it is what the Lord meant.

---

33. A Fast-Day Dinner.

Some plain, honest people may be surprised at the heading of this article, because it implies a dinner of some sort on a day of fasting, whereas, according to their old-fashioned notions there should be no dinner

at all on a fast day. And truly fasting did formerly imply *partial*, at least, if not *total* abstinence from food during the period of the fast. It was thought that eating to *the full* was incompatible with genuine fasting. Indeed it was considered that eating at all broke a fast. I suppose no one doubts that Daniel, Nehemiah, Ezra, and the pious Jews in general, abstained entirely from food on their days of fasting. Who has an idea that they ate any dinner on those days? But mind has marched a great way since those men flourished. Whether its march has always been *forward*, I leave others to determine. *Now*, according to the views which prevail in that church which cannot go wrong, and which don't make mistakes even when she contradicts herself, abstinence is not essential to a fast; and a fast-day dinner, so far from being no dinner at all, as some puritanical christians still contend it should be, is a rare repast—one of the very best dinners in the whole week. I ought to say here that some Protestants have imbibed this doctrine of the infallible church, and very complacently practice according to it. We have a great many Protestants among us who do not *protest* as thoroughly or as strenuously as we think they should.

What put me in mind of this subject was the following incident. As I was sitting at table the other day, the topic of conversation was a very delicate preparation of eggs. I took no particular interest in it, until one of the company remarked that when she resided in the family of Mr. A., a distinguished Catholic, that dish was always a part of their fast-day dinner. This arrested my attention. Fast-day dinner! exclaimed I. Who ever heard of a dinner on a fast-day?

It is not possible they have a dinner at Mr. A.'s on fast-days! Dinner! replied the person, I never desire to eat a better. This made me curious to enquire what constituted the fast-day dinner at Mr. A.'s table. Well, said she, to begin, a *rock fish* dressed with eggs and butter, (no mean affair this where there is an appetite,) *eggs* prepared in two ways, and *oysters*. They dispense with *vegetables* I presume, said I. O no, she rejoined; and to this I readily assented, for I had forgotten myself in supposing that they dispensed with vegetables. *Timothy* does not prophecy of the antichrist that he shall command to abstain from vegetables, but only from "*meats*, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving." Well, surely, said I, they have no *desert* on their fast-days? How you talk, said she; they have the very best, and every variety. And do they call that a *fast-day* dinner? and do they suppose that they fast when they eat it? Certainly, said she. Well, I suppose it is because they eat very *sparingly* of what is set before them. You are mistaken, replied my informant, *quantity* has nothing to do in the matter. It is not the quantity eaten that constitutes a fast, but the *kind*. There the conversation ended, but my thoughts proceeded on. And this, thought I, is fasting. So the church teaches, and millions on their way to the judgment believe it. What dupes! how deceived to suppose that this is fasting. If not deceived themselves, what insulters of God, to endeavor to palm it off on him as fasting! A *change of food* is fasting! To eat *differently* on one day from what we do on other days, is to keep a fast! Admirable doctrine!

34. The Mass.

There is a great deal of the phraseology of the Romish church which is not a little peculiar, not to say *outlandish*. The Christian reader who is not very familiar with other authors than those who by inspiration wrote the Bible, does not know what to make of these terms when he comes across them in books professing to treat of Christianity. "The mass, the mass," he repeats to himself, "what is that?" He has read his Bible through and through, but he has found nothing about the mass there. He thinks it ought to be there, if it is any part of Christianity. Why should apostolical Christians have been silent on a subject on which those who claim to be their direct descendants are so loquacious? He does not even meet in his Bible with any doctrine or rite to which the word *mass* seems at all appropriate. He would not object to the word, if he could find the *thing* there. It never occurs to him that by the mass Catholics can mean the transaction recorded by Matthew in his 26th chapter, and by three other sacred writers, and which we commonly speak of as the institution of the Lord's Supper. But that is what they mean by it. Then, they tell us, the first mass was said. In the Douay Catechism we find these questions and answers: *Q.* Who said the first mass? *A.* Jesus Christ. *Q.* When did he say it? *A.* At his last supper. Here it is, question and answer for it, if not *chapter and verse*. The Biblical reader will please to bear in mind, whenever hereafter he reads the narrative of

the transaction, that the writer is giving an account of the first mass that was ever *said!*

But they may call it mass, if they please, and they may speak of Christ's instituting the ordinance as his saying mass. Words are nothing, though it is certainly best that they should be well chosen and fitly applied. If they mean by their mass what we mean by the Lord's Supper, that is the main point. But the truth is, they mean by it as different a thing as you can well imagine. Just hear what "the Christian's Guide" says on the subject: "I profess likewise, that in the *mass* there is offered to God a true, proper and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead." Christ offered it first when he said mass, and every priest now offers it when he says mass. Well, reader, you and I must not judge rashly. We will look again at the account given of the matter in the Bible, and we will see if we can find in it any thing of the nature of a sacrifice. He "took bread and blessed, and brake and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat." And then he took the cup and gave it. Where is any *sacrifice* here, and especially where is any *propitiatory* sacrifice? Does the account we have of sacrifices in the Old Testament, and in the epistle to the Hebrews, accord with what was done on this occasion? The Catholics say that when Christ performed these actions with the bread and wine, *he offered himself to God as a propitiatory sacrifice.* How does what he did, bear even the least resemblance to the offering of a propitiatory sacrifice? There was no bloodshed—no life taken, as was the case in all propitiatory sacrifices under the law, and in the sacrifice which Christ made of himself on the cross, and which

has always, by Pagans, as well as the disciples of the true religion, been considered as essential to a *propitiatory* sacrifice. I confess there was *something* offered. Bread and wine were offered. These might constitute a *eucharistic* sacrifice, but never a propitiatory one. If things of this kind can constitute a propitiatory sacrifice, then I do not see why Cain, who offered "of the fruit of the ground," was not accepted equally with Abel who brought to the Lord "of the firstlings of his flock." But whatever was offered, it was not offered *to God.* A sacrifice, to be a sacrifice, must be offered to God, as even the quotation from the Christian's guide recognizes. But what was offered in this case was offered to the disciples. "Take, eat," he said to them. It is true the bread and wine were offered them as the memorial of a sacrifice in which the body of Christ was to be broken and his blood shed; but the memorial of a sacrifice is not a sacrifice. The emblematical representation of a thing is not the thing itself. Plainly there was no sacrifice in this transaction.

But again: if Christ in the eucharist offered himself a sacrifice to God, as they affirm; and afterwards, as all admit, offered himself on the cross, then he *twice* offered himself; and if so, the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews was under a great mistake, for he says, "Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many," "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once for all.*" Heb. 9 : 28, and 10 : 10. Here is a contradiction. Which shall we believe? The apostle of the Gentiles or the Catholic church? If Christ really offered himself in the eucharist—on the *table*, as Catholics contend—there was no need

of his offering himself on the *cross*. His twice offering himself was quite unnecessary. If "in the mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice," what need of another on Calvary? One "true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice" is all that is wanted.

But if the Catholic doctrine be true, Christ has been offered not twice only, but innumerable times. In every mass that ever has been said, he has been offered. He is offered to-day as really as he was on the day of his crucifixion. He is offered on earth while he is interceding in heaven. Both parts of the priest's office, the propitiation and the intercession, are going on at the same time—a thing unheard of in the history of the priesthood! Did the Jewish high priest, the type of Jesus, our great high priest, execute both parts of his office at the same moment? Moreover, according to this doctrine, there was no propriety in Christ's saying on the cross, "It is finished," for it is *not* finished yet, nor will it be, till the last mass is said. It depends on the will of the priest when it shall be finished. This to me is *shocking* doctrine. What! Can a priest cause Christ to be offered just when he pleases? My mind recoils from the conviction. There is what by a figure is called the "crucifying of the Son of God afresh," but this appears like doing it literally.

I know the Catholics make a distinction here. They say, and let them be heard, that Christ in the eucharist is offered in an *unbloody* manner, while the sacrifice of the cross was bloody. And this distinction they lay great stress on. But I wonder they see not the consequence of this explanation—that if the sacri-

fice is unbloody, it cannot be propitiatory, which, nevertheless, they say it is. Unbloody, yet propitiatory! Who ever heard of an unbloody propitiatory sacrifice? What Jew? What Pagan? A propitiatory sacrifice, be it remembered, is a sacrifice for atonement—a sacrifice with a view to the remission of sins. This all acknowledge. But "without shedding of blood is no remission," Heb. 9 : 22—consequently no propitiatory sacrifice. Now here is no shedding of blood, they say; yet remission is effected by it! It is a *propitiatory* sacrifice, notwithstanding. Who does not see the contradiction? They must take back their admission that it is unbloody, or else acknowledge that it is not propitiatory. They cannot hold to both without self-contradiction.

The reader sees that this doctrine of the Catholic church subverts that great principle in the divine government, that "without shedding of blood is no remission"—a principle not merely inscribed on the page of the Bible, but written with the finger of God on the mind of man. The conscience of the veriest pagan reads it there? If a sacrifice may be propitiatory, though unbloody, never a victim that bled under the Jewish economy, need have been slain; *and Christ need not have died!* The doctrine of the mass therefore, that a sacrifice may be propitiatory, though bloodless, undermines the Gospel.

One inference more from their doctrine I must not forget. It is this. If in the eucharist a propitiatory sacrifice is offered, then a propitiatory sacrifice may be effected by mere *action.* No *passion* whatever is necessary to it—expiation is made without any *suffering*—made by a mere *doing!* Is this truth? Can *an-*

tiquity be pleaded for this doctrine? Can that be the *oldest* religion which cherishes and teaches it?

There is *no* sacrifice in what is improperly called the mass—least of all a *propitiatory* sacrifice. The doctrine is error—error in a capital particular—on a fundamental point—gross and most pernicious error. What then shall we think of a church which not only inculcates it, but gives it the greatest prominence, and makes the service connected with it the main thing in its religion? I have my thoughts. The reader must have his.

I reserve some things on the mass for a future communication.

---

35. More about the Mass.

But before I proceed to the Mass, I wish to add a word about *relics*. In my communication on that subject, I referred to Bellarmine as quoting from the Old Testament in support of the doctrine of relics. Since then, I have recollected a fact which makes me wonder that a Catholic should ever appeal to the Old Testament for authority in favor of relics. The reader probably knows that no relics are more common among the Catholics, and none more highly valued than the *bones* of deceased saints and martyrs. Now, if Numbers, 19: 16, be consulted, it will be found that under the Jewish dispensation, if a person so much as touched the bone of a man, he was ceremonially unclean for seven days, and had to submit to a tedious pro-

cess of purification before he could be restored to the privileges of God's worship, from which he had been temporarily excluded in consequence of that contact. This being the case, it is pretty certain that the bones of the dead were not handled and cherished as relics by the pious Jews, as they are by our Catholics. There was nothing which the Israelite more carefully avoided than some of those very things which are now carried about and shown as relics. Therefore, I say, it is not best to go so far back as the Old Testament for testimony in favor of relics.

Now let us to the mass again. It is known, I suppose, that they quote Scripture in favor of the mass. That circumstance however proves nothing. Scripture is not always aptly quoted. It should be remembered by those who are prone to think it in favor of a doctrine, that its abettors appeal to the Bible in its support, that Scripture was once quoted by a celebrated character to prove the propriety of the Son of God casting himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. It is always advisable to refer to the quotation, and see for ourselves if it makes in favor of the doctrine. The principal passage which the Catholics adduce in support of their mass, is that concerning Melchizedek, in the 14th chapter of Genesis. Abraham and his armed servants were on their return from "the slaughter of the kings," when they were met by this distinguished personage. The record of the occurrence is as follows: "And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him.... And he gave him tithes of all." Here is the text, reader. Now the doctrine deduced from it is this that

"In the mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead." Q. E. D.

Do not smile at the incongruity of the text and the doctrine—the distance of the conclusion from the premises. Sacred things are to be handled seriously. I know the reader only smiles at the *logic* of the thing. But he should remember that they do the best thing they can, when they quote this passage in favor of their mass. If there were other Scripture more appropriate and to the point than this, they would quote it. I have no doubt the intelligent Catholic is ashamed of this reference to the Bible in behalf of the mass. He sees that it has no bearing on the case. It is not to compare in point of appropriateness with the tempter's quotation referred to above.

Just observe *first*, that it was as *king*, not as priest, that Melchizedek brought forth the bread and wine. "Melchizedek, *king* of Salem, brought forth bread and wine." It was an act of royal bounty—an exercise of kingly hospitality. True, it is said immediately after, that he was a priest as well as a king; but that is said in reference to what follows, not what precedes. "And he was priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him." In his capacity of king he brought forth bread and wine. In the exercise of his priestly office he blessed Abraham. To bless, we know, was one part of the priest's office. Numbers, 6: 23. His bringing forth bread and wine had nothing to do with his being a priest. What proves this view of the passage correct is, the manner in which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews refers to it. In his *seventh* chapter he introduces Melchizedek as a priest,

and in that character as the model of Christ's priesthood; and he speaks of his blessing Abraham, but says not a word about his bringing forth bread and wine. Why is not this circumstance—this most material circumstance, according to the Catholic notion, alluded to, if in it he acted as a priest and as the sacerdotal type of Christ? Why does the apostle, when speaking of him as a priest, mention only his benediction of Abraham? Now if, as I think it is manifest, he brought forth bread and wine not in the exercise of his office as priest, it overturns the Catholic argument at once.

But *secondly*, consider what in all human probability was the object of the bread and wine. Would any one, in reading the passage, suppose it could have been for any other purpose than refreshment? What an idea! to come out to a people returning famished and weary from the toils of conflict, with a sacrifice—a propitiatory sacrifice too—the mass—with bread and wine, not to be eaten and drank, but to be offered to God! What more unnatural than such a supposition! On the other hand what more natural, and proper than to bring forth, for those fatigued soldiers, "wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart," to refresh them? It was just what, under the circumstances, they needed.

In further proof of the correctness of this view of the passage, we find that Abraham recognized the priesthood of Melchizedek, not by receiving bread and wine at his hands, but by giving him tithes. "And he gave him tithes of all."

We see then there is no proof of any sacrifice in this transaction. There was nothing offered to God.

What was offered, was to Abraham and his company. But if the offering was to God, it could but constitute an *eucharistic* sacrifice. Bread and wine might be offered as thank-offerings. But a bloodless propitiatory sacrifice was unknown under the Old Testament. Whatever view we take of the passage, it cannot make for the mass. That which was offered was only bread and wine. The Catholics do not pretend that they were changed into the body and blood of Christ. Melchizedek lived nearly 2000 years before Christ had a body. How could transubstantiation take place so long before the incarnation? But if simple bread and wine were offered, then the act of Melchizedek, if any thing more than an example of hospitality, was rather the model of the Protestants' Lord's Supper, than the Roman Catholic's mass.—And here it may be observed, that Melchizedek does not seem to have denied the cup to the laity, as later priests have done. O no, it was the Council of Constance, in the 15th century, that established that custom.

But Catholics have another argument from Scripture in favor of their mass. It is derived from the perpetuity of Christ's priesthood. If, say they, Christ is a priest forever, and "every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices," there must be a perpetual sacrifice, else he would be a priest without exercising priestly functions. But do they not see that this is to suppose Christ a priest after the order of Aaron, and not after that of Melchizedek? It is true the Aaronic priests offered sacrifice during the whole term of their priesthood. They stood "daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices." But what is said of Christ? He "needeth not daily, as those high

priests, to offer up sacrifice.....for this he did once, when he offered up himself." And again: "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God." Yet the Catholics say he *needeth* daily to offer up sacrifice, and that *he*, as well as the Aaronic priests, offers oftentimes the same sacrifices! They make Christ to resemble the Jewish priests in those very particulars in which the apostle says he stands in contrast to them!

As to Christ's being a priest *forever*, if that means any thing more than is expressed in Heb. 7 : 24, where he is said to have "an unchangeable priesthood," that is, a priesthood that passes not from one to another, as did the Aaronic, it is explained in the succeeding verse, where it is said that "he ever liveth to make intercession." He is a priest forever, because he ever liveth to make intercession. It is not at all necessary that he should ever live to offer sacrifice, in order to his being a priest forever. Intercession is as much a part of the priest's office as sacrifice. And here I would ask whether the Jewish high-priest was not as much a priest when he went into the most holy place to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice, and to burn incense, as when, before he entered, he was engaged in offering the sacrifice? Undoubtedly he was. He offered no sacrifice while he was in the holy place. He went in for another purpose altogether. So Christ, the great antitype, has entered "not into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." And there he remains. He has never come out. He had no need to come out to

offer another sacrifice, as the Jewish high-priest had. "By *one* offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Were another sacrifice necessary, he would return in person to earth to offer it; nor would it be "under the form of bread and wine," for the apostle argues, in Heb. 9: 25, 26, that he must suffer as often as he offers himself—that he cannot be offered without suffering. Yet the Douay Catechism says he "continues daily to offer himself." He is sacrificing, according to them, while he is interceding—sacrificing in the place appropriated to intercession, and offering himself without suffering! The Bible tells us, "Christ was *once* offered," but that "he *ever* liveth to make intercession." It makes the perpetuity of his priesthood to consist in his intercession. The Catholic doctrine, on the other hand, teaches us that he is *continually* offered, and *therefore* a priest forever. And yet they appeal to the Bible in proof of their doctrine!

---

36. The Host.

Here is another of the *peculiar* terms of the Catholic religion. Protestants commonly use the word to signify an army, or a great multitude. But Catholics mean by it *one* thing. It is the name they give to the consecrated wafer in the Eucharist. Wafer! What has a wafer to do with the Eucharist? We read that our Saviour took *bread* and blessed, and break, and gave it to his disciples; but we read nothing about

any wafer. If by wafer the same thing is meant, which we mean by bread, yet why this change of names? Why not call it what Christ called it? Why seek to improve upon things as they were left by him?

When the wafer, the thin piece of bread, is consecrated; that is, when a blessing has been invoked, and thanks have been given, for that is all that Christ did, (the same precisely which he did when he fed the multitudes; in which case not even Catholics contend that there was any transubstantiation of the bread into another substance; and if no such effect was produced on that bread by the blessing and thanksgiving, how should the same produce such an effect on the bread of the sacrament?) then it is no longer called a wafer. It is true, St. Paul calls it the same afterwards that he called it before. But not so the Catholics. Now they call it the *host*, a word derived from the Latin *hostia*, signifying victim, or sacrifice.

But why change its name? And above all, why give it so different a name? One minute to call a thing a wafer, and the next a victim, a sacrifice! and when nothing but a prayer has intervened. Has it become so different a thing that it deserves so different a name? I know the Catholics *say* a great change has taken place in its nature, and therefore it ought to have a new name. Well, I am open to conviction. When a great change has taken place in any thing, such a change that the original substance of the thing has totally departed, which is the greatest change any thing can undergo, it commonly appears to the senses different from what it did before. But the wafer and the host *look* exactly alike, and they *smell* alike, and *taste* and *feel* precisely alike. The *form*

is the same it was before; and by every test by which the *substance* can be examined, it is found to be the same. Yet they say the two things are as unlike as bread, and the body, soul and divinity of Christ! And this on pain of perdition must be believed, though the senses all exclaim against it; and reason, that calm faculty, almost getting into a passion with the absurdity of the doctrine, cries out against it; and though all experience be against it. And in favor of it, there is what? Why, Christ said "This is my body," speaking as Paul did when he said "and that rock *was* Christ;" and as he himself did, when he said "I *am* the door." Did any one ever contend that Christ was literally a *door* or a rock? Oh no. Why then is it contended that the bread was literally his body? Is it so said? And are not the other things also so said? It is strange the Catholics should contend for a literal interpretation in the first case, while they will not allow it in the other cases.

But if they contend for a strictly literal interpretation of "this is my body," why do they not abide by such an interpretation? Why do they say, as in the Christian's Guide, page 14, that "in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, *together with the soul and divinity* of our Lord Jesus Christ?" If Christ says it is his body, he does not say it is his soul and divinity. Where do they get that from? They say it is his body, because he says it is. But why do they say it is his soul and Divinity also, when he does not say so? You see they do not interpret the passage literally, after all.

But what do the Catholics do with this host? Principally two things.

1. They *adore* it. The Bible says "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." But the Catholics worship the host. Yes, but is not Christ to be worshiped, and do they not hold that the host is Christ? Suppose they do hold so. Does it follow that every thing is as they hold it to be? And if in this case the fact be different from what they hold it to be, is not their worship idolatry whatever they may verily think? Paul verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. But did his verily thinking it was his duty, make it so, or exculpate him? No, he ought to have been better informed. And Catholics ought to be better informed than to suppose that the host is Christ—a wafer, God—a bit of bread, not only the body, but the very soul and divinity of Christ! I say they ought to know better. And if they do not, they must take the consequences of such ignorance.

2. The other thing which they do with the host is to *eat* it. This is all very well on our theory. It is bread; and what is bread for but to be eaten. Christ tells us to put it to this use. He says "Take, *eat*." But on their supposition that it is bread no longer, it is no longer proper to be eaten. Its nature being so changed, there ought to be a corresponding change in its use. If it is to be adored, it is not to be devoured. Common sense teaches this. These two uses of it, adoring it and eating it, are incongruous to each other. One of them at least ought to be dispensed with. If they continue to eat it, they ought to give up adoring it. But if they must have it as an object of worship, they should cease to use it as an article of food. Any body can tell you that you ought not to eat what you

worship. *Cicero* thought such a thing could not be In his work on Theology, he asks "Was any man ever so mad as to take that which he feeds upon for a god?" But Cicero did not live late enough, else he could not have asked that question. Papal Rome has far outdone Pagan Rome.

If I believed in transubstantiation, I would never receive the Eucharist. I know that I must *spiritually* eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ, that I may have life in me, that is, I must by meditation and faith, contemplate and appropriate his sacrifice; but I could never *literally* eat what I believed to be my divine Saviour. What, take him actually between my teeth! chew and swallow what I had just before worshiped, and adored! Let not the language be objected to. It is unavoidable. Rather let horror be felt at the thing. I would not speak lightly of sacred things, nor untenderly of the opinions of others; but the idea of adoring and eating the same object is shocking to me. Some readers will perhaps say that I must misrepresent the Catholics—that it is impossible they should believe so. Let such convict me of misrepresentation, if they can, and I will take the first opportunity of retracting.

---

37. Priests.

Where are we? Under what dispensation are we living? One would suppose, from hearing so much said among a certain class of people about *priests*

and their offering *sacrifice*, that the Old Testament dispensation—the dispensation of types and shadows—was still in force: and that the Messiah, the substance and antitype, was yet to come. Priests were a sacred order of men under the Jewish dispensation, and sacrifice constituted an important part of divine service. But, under the Christian dispensation, there is no order of priests, neither any literal sacrifices offered. We have, indeed, under this dispensation, a great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, who, having once offered himself to bear the sins of many, has passed into the heavens for us, where he ever lives to make intercession; and he makes all his disciples, in a sense, both "kings and priests unto God"—John 1: 6; even as also *Peter*, who is prime authority with us all, testifies. When addressing the Christians to whom he wrote, he says: "Ye are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices." 1 Pet. 2: 5. This priesthood, which Peter recognizes, is very different from the Roman Catholic priesthood. All Christians share equally in the New Testament priesthood, and these priests are set apart to offer up *spiritual* sacrifices, or as it is said, v. 9, that they "should show forth the praises" of God. This is not the object of the Roman priesthood, neither are its functions performed by all the faithful.

The truth is, the Roman Catholic priesthood, that large and influential body of ecclesiastics, has no more warrant and authority for its existence from Christ, than it has from Mohammed. There is no more in the *Bible* in favor of such an order, than there is in the *Koran*, and perhaps not as much. Christ instituted no such office—authorized no such

characters in his church. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;" but he gave none priests. And these he gave or appointed "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," not for saying mass, offering sacrifice, burning incense, hearing confessions, and the like of those things. Christ appointed no officer to perform such functions as these. I have quoted from Eph. 4: 11, 12. In 1 Cor. 12: 28, we have another enumeration of the officers which God has set in the church, but there is not a word about priests. They are a class of persons not at all needed under the Christian dispensation. The great High Priest of our profession answers every purpose. He has offered the sacrifice which is efficacious to put away sin—has shed a blood which cleanseth from all sin; and he ever liveth to be our Advocate with the Father. Neither for propitiation, nor for intercession, need we any other priest. Other priests are quite out of place since he has come.

If Christ instituted an order of priests, why do we not read any thing about them in that choice piece of ecclesiastical history, the Acts of the Apostles? It is very strange. We read about Jewish priests in the Acts, and mention is made of the priests of Jupiter, but not a word do we hear of any Christian priests. Who were they? What were their names? Stephen was a deacon; Philip was an evangelist; Paul was an apostle; Peter was an elder, and there were many who were addressed as bishops. But who was a priest? If Paul was, why does he not sometimes call himself so in the introduction of his Epistles?

Was he ashamed of the office? Peter says he was an elder or presbyter, but gives no hint of his having been a priest. He seems to have had no idea of his being a priest in any other sense than as being one of that "holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices," which all true believers compose.

If the priesthood be a Christian order of men, why does Paul, in writing to Timothy and Titus, take no notice of it? He gives the qualifications of bishops and deacons, but says nothing about those of priests. Were they to have no qualifications? Must a bishop be "blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, apt to teach," &c. and might a priest be any thing he pleased in these respects? Might any body be a priest? If not, the silence of the apostle is decisive. Any one may see now why the Catholic priests do not like the Bible. Who likes to be treated by book or man with *silent* contempt? The priests will never forgive the evangelists and apostles for having passed them by in the way they have done. Never. And they will never let their people have the genuine Bible. If they do, they will lose the people.

I suppose it is scarcely necessary to say, that if Catholics meant no more by a priest, than some of our Protestant brethren mean by the word, viz. a presbyter, of which priest, as used by them, is but an abbreviation, there could have been no occasion for this article. But they mean by a priest, a real *sacerdotal* character, as much as the priest of the Old Testament was—one who literally offers sacrifice. They pretend that their priests offer sacrifice now—that whenever they perform mass, a true, proper, and

propitiatory sacrifice, for the living and the dead, is offered by them. And if you ask them what they offer, they tell you they offer Christ—that, under their hands, he becomes again, and as often as they choose to make him so, a propitiatory sacrifice—that he is as *really* offered by them in their missal service, as he was by himself on Calvary, only now he is offered in an unbloody manner! This is what their priests do. A priest must have somewnat to offer. He is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices. Now, the Catholic priest, finding nothing else to offer, pretends to re-offer Christ. For all this—this priesthood, and this sacrifice—every one knows there is no more authority in the Bible than there is for the Hindoo Suttee—the burning of widows.

---

38. The Celibacy of the Clergy.

This is the Roman Catholic doctrine; but is it *Bible* doctrine? I believe, however, that the Catholics say it is no part of doctrine, but of *discipline*. This is a sorry evasion. It amounts to a confession that some of their ecclesiastical practices have no warrant in Christian doctrine. It is saying that it is a part of their discipline that their clergy *do* not marry, but no part of their doctrine that they *should* not.

But let us see how this doctrine or discipline, or by whatever name it may be called, tallies with the Scriptures; and as we proceed, we shall see why the

Catholics are unwilling that the people should read the Bible. We shall see what a world of trouble it would occasion the priests, were they to be in the habit of reading it. Suppose, for example, an intelligent Catholic to take up Paul's *first* epistle to Timothy for perusal. Well, he reads along until he comes to the third chapter, where he finds Paul telling Timothy what a bishop must be. He must be this and that, and, among other things, "the husband of one wife." The reader is shocked. "Why, what does this mean? Our priests tell us that a bishop must not marry at all. Our church prohibits all her clergy from marrying. Which is right, our priests and church, or St. Paul?" He concludes to read on. Coming to verse 4th, he meets with this qualification of the bishop: "one that ruleth well his own house," i. e. *family*. But how can he, if not permitted to have a house of his own? He proceeds: "having his children in subjection." His *children—his* children!!! What, a bishop having children of his own, and having them collected in a family too! And then there follows a most provoking parenthesis, "for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" His ruling his own house well is to be a criterion of his ability to take care of the church of God, and yet they say that he must not marry!

But the apostle passes on to speak of the *deacons*, and to say what they must be; and in verse 11th, he says what sort of wives they should have—"even so must their wives be grave," &c. So far from encouraging a doubt whether they should marry or not, Paul gives them directions for choosing a wife.

Now, need any one wonder that the priests do not want to have the Bible read by the people; a Bible which contains such statements as these, and which moreover declares that marriage is honorable in *all*, without exception of *clergy*? I do not wonder at it. Who would put into the hands of his children and servants, and recommend to their perusal and belief, a book containing statements so much at variance with his *oral* communications to them?

But there is a passage a little farther on, at the beginning of chapter 4, which, I suppose, constitutes with the priests a still stronger objection to the popular reading of this part of the Bible particularly "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith—*forbidding to marry*." Now, they are afraid that if the people were to read this, they might say, "Why, St. Paul must mean our church, it forbids to marry." And as it might give the priests some trouble to show that he did not mean their church, the better way is not to let the people know that there is any such passage in the Bible.

---

89. A Holier State than Matrimony!

In one of his last letters to Mr. Breckenridge, Mr. Hughes, of Philadelphia, says that the Catholic church does not forbid marriage, but "she holds, however, that there is a *holier state*." When I had read the letter

thus far, I stopped, and said to myself, "How is this? a holier state! I must look into this." So I thought a moment; and I came to the conclusion that I could not hold with the Catholic church in this thing, for the following reasons among others.

1. Because, according to this doctrine there is a holier state than that to which *Enoch* attained, and from which he was translated! He, we know, was a married man, and begat sons and daughters; and it would seem that he married *earlier* than any other Patriarch! And yet all the while after his marriage, for three hundred years, he *walked with God;* and "he had this testimony, that he pleased God;" and God, in honor of his eminent piety, translated him "that he should not see death!" Now do you suppose I am going to believe that the *state* of a Roman priest is *holier* than that of Enoch; and that he would have been a better man if he had let marriage alone? Never. I would ask, Do the priests do more than *walk with God?* Have they a higher testimony than that they please him? Are they *translated?* What is the reason we never hear of their *holier state* being thus honored?

2. If there be a holier state than matrimony, why did not the law of the Jewish priesthood enjoin celibacy, as the letter tells us the law of the Catholic priesthood does? Above all, why was not the high priest, whose functions were of the most sacred character, so much as *permitted* to occupy that holier state? He was not only authorized, but, it is believed, was *obliged* to marry.

3. The letter says, speaking of the Catholic church, "the law of her priesthood enjoins celibacy, &c. She

does not choose them (those who marry) for her clergy." Truly, *she* is very *fastidious* in the choice of her clergy. Why need *she* be so much more *particular* than Paul required Timothy and Titus to be in the choice of their clergy? *Their* bishops and deacons might have *a wife*; but if any "wish to marry," *she does not choose them for her clergy!*

4. I thought when I read about *the holier state*, "what if all the world should aspire to the holier state?" Certainly, if it is holier, they ought to aspire to it. Priests are not the only persons who are commanded to be *perfect*.

Let the Catholic priesthood no longer make such an *ado* about their celibacy, as a *holier state*. Protestants allow their clergy to do as they please in this matter. If they remain unmarried, it is all very well. At the same time they are not extremely solicitous that their ministers should aspire to any holier state than that from which Enoch was translated.

---

40. Auricular Confession.

I have been thinking with myself, where is the authority for this doctrine and practice of the Catholics—whence came the idea of confessing sin to a priest? Every one admits that sin ought to be confessed—but why to *a priest?* Common sense would seem to dictate that confession should be made immediately to the being offended; especially if he be easily access-

ble. If a child offends his father, does he confess the offence to some *third* person, when his father is near at hand too; and above all, does he select for that *third* person, an equally offending brother? Was ever such a thing heard of as this? Yet this is the Catholic doctrine. It sends us to a brother as deep in the offence as we, to confess to him, that we have sinned against our father, when that father is near by, and when, moreover, he says "Come to me!" I think both the brothers, the penitent and the priest, had much better go directly to the father. I find that this is what they used to do in old times. I have been looking into the Bible to discover how it was then, and I perceive that they all went to God to make their confessions. They did not stop at the priest. There was David, and Daniel, and Ezra, and Nehemiah, and I know not how many more. They all went with their sin directly to God. Read that precious Psalm, the 51st. There is David before God. He confesses to the one he had offended. "Against thee," he says. And may we not use that Psalm? May we not go and say "against thee?" Must we turn aside to the priest? The *publican* did not. He went straight on to God. And the *prodigal* did not stop short of his father. Why should we? *Why should Catholics?*

I think the sinner should go on to God—and I do not like that Catholic doctrine, because it stops him as he is going to God. The sinner is on his way to confess his sin to his maker, and to implore of him pardoning mercy, and it says to him "you need not go so far—the priest will hear you confess—he can forgive you." I like better the Protestant doctrine, which speeds and cheers the penitent on his way to God.

Nor can I see why we want more than one mediator between us and God. Why is not Christ enough? How admirably qualified he is for his work? With one nature that reaches up to God, and another that reaches down to man, how excellently fitted is he to mediate for us! Do we want another between us and Christ? O no. Let the priest please not put himself in the way. Jesus says, "Come unto me;" we want no human priest between us and our "great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens for us."

I may be very dull, but really I cannot see for my part what is the use of the priest; for surely he cannot forgive a sinner, unless he repents; and if he does repent, God forgives him, and then who cares whether the priest forgives him or not. If confession to the priest is intended to supersede confession to God, it is certainly a great mischief. If not so intended, it is useless, for our being forgiven depends on the nature of our confession to God, as penitent or otherwise.

But they allege in support of their doctrine, a verse of Scripture, "confess your faults one to another." I suppose the reason they allege this is, that it is the best they can find for their purpose. They must be hard pushed for authority, when they resort to that passage. "Confess your faults *one to another*." This implies something *mutual*. If I confess to the priest, he must confess to me, for it says *one to another* This puts priests and all on a level. There is nothing *auricular* in this. Certainly we ought to confess our faults one to another, and to "pray one for another," as the same apostle exhorts. But this is by no means the Catholic doctrine of confession. That is quite a different thing.

On the whole, it is my opinion that the world can dispense with this doctrine, and with the practice founded on it as well as with any thing which it has in use.

---

41. A Mistake Corrected.

In an article entitled "Auricular Confession," the writer stated, that in looking into the Bible he discovered that all the penitents mentioned therein went directly to God to make their confessions of sin, and not to the priests; and he spoke of David, Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, as examples in point. He finds, however, that he was mistaken in saying that they all confessed to God instead of the priests. There is one exception, and he is willing that the Catholics should have the advantage of it. It is the case of *Judas Iscariot*, recorded in Matthew, 27: 3, 4. He did *not* go to God with his confession. He went to the chief priests, and it was to them he said, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." Here, we must confess, is an example of confession to a priest. But it is the *only* one, I believe, in the Bible. Judas also brought *money* (thirty pieces of silver) to the priests; so that the Catholics have authority (such as it is) for that part of their practice. I am determined I will do the Catholics justice. They shall have the advantage of every particle of Scripture which really makes in their favor. It is well known that they need it.

But, poor man! He got nothing by going to the priests. It was their cruel and contemptuous treatment of him, as much as any thing else, that determined him to go and hang himself. How differently even Judas would have been treated, if he had gone with a broken heart to our great High Priest, Jesus! Ah, he had better gone to him whom he betrayed, than to them to whom he betrayed him. I think I shall always go to Him, notwithstanding the example of Judas.

---

42. Purgatory.

There are no worse reasoners than the Catholics, and I suppose the cause of this is that they are so little accustomed to reason. Men rarely do *well* what they are not used to do. The mind needs to be disciplined to thinking and reasoning, else it performs these operations but very indifferently. Hence, you hear so many persons say *therefore*, when nothing follows, or, at any rate, that does not follow which they suppose. Of this, the Catholics, not being in the habit of thinking and reasoning, their very religion prohibiting these operations, afford us some wonderful specimens. Between their premises and conclusion there is often so great a gulf, so deep and wide both, that I have wondered how they manage to get over it. Let us hear them on the subject of purgatory. They feel as if they would like to have a little Scripture for this dogma of theirs—a text or two;

not for the satisfaction of the faithful, (for to them it is sufficient that the church believes the doctrine,) but to meet the heretics. But where shall they find in the Bible any thing favorable to purgatory. The Bible speaks plainly enough of *two* places beyond the grave, but it says nothing about a *third* place. It tells us of a *heaven* and a *hell*, but of an intermediate purgatory never a word. It is true that some hundreds of years afterwards certain writers speak of it as a Christian doctrine, but I want to know why the *older*, the *inspired* writers, say nothing about it. We read frequently in the Bible of being purged from sins, but most unfortunately for the Catholic doctrine, the purging is done *in this life*, not after death; and it is done, not by *fire*, as that doctrine asserts, but by *blood*. So that those passages in which *purging* occurs, do not help the Catholic cause. Then they look in the Bible for the word *fire;* and they read of the fire that is not quenched, and of everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. But this will not answer their purpose. This fire is everlasting, and for devils as well as wicked men. They never imagined a purgatory for devils. The fire of *their* purgatory is to be quenched.

But there is a passage having *fire* in it, which they adduce as to the point. It is 1 Cor. 3 : 15 : "yet so as by fire." These are the premises in the grand argument; and the conclusion is purgatory, a place of temporary punishment by fire after this life. Q. E. D. Those letters were never more out of place. If there existed independent and irrefragible proof from another quarter of the doctrine of purgatory, in that case it might be innocently imagined that the apostle had

in his mind some remote allusion to it in this chapter; but that this proverbial phrase, "saved, yet so as by fire," signifying, as used by writers both sacred and profane, *a narrow escape out of a great danger*, should be relied on as the principal support of the doctrine, is truly marvelous! I always thought that the fire of purgatory was to *purify men's souls;* but the fire here spoken of is to *try every man's work*. Besides, it is not said that the person shall be saved by fire, but *so as* by fire; that is, with the like difficulty with which a man in a burning house is saved from its conflagration. A good man, who, on the precious foundation of Jesus Christ, builds worthless materials, such as wood, hay, stubble, shall suffer the loss of his work, yet he himself shall be saved, though with great difficulty, *so as by fire*. So much for the *main pillar* of purgatory.

But they point us to Matthew, 5. 25, 26, "agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Now I would look the intelligent Catholic, who refers to this in proof of purgatory, in the face, and ask him if he is in earnest; if he can think that the doctrine of purgatory derives any support from that passage. What is it but a most excellent piece of advice in reference to the settlement of differences among men? But they say, "does not Christ, in Matthew, 12 : 32, speak of a sin which shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come; and does not this imply

that some sins may be forgiven in the world to come?" It implies no such thing. That form of expression is employed but to strengthen the denial. Besides, how can they be said to be forgiven, if they are purged away by fire?

Ah, but does not St. Peter say that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison? Where were they but in purgatory? But were all the giant sinners before the flood in purgatory? If so, there may be some hope for us heretics. But why should Christ go to purgatory to *preach* to the spirits there? It is not by *preaching*, according to the Catholics, that souls are liberated from purgatory, but by *prayers* and *masses*, well paid for. And why should Christ select out the antediluvian sinners, and preach only to them? Indeed, I think the friends of purgatory had better give up that text; and not attempt to support their dogma by *Scripture*, but be content with *tradition*, consoling themselves with the reflection that though nothing is *written* about it, yet it has been *handed* down.

As for us Protestants, we do not believe in *burning* out sin—in salvation by *fire*. We *protest* against it. We believe in the *washing* away of sin, and that by the blood of Jesus alone: "The blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth *us* from *all* sin." What is there left for fire to do? The spirits of the just made perfect ascribe no part of their salvation to fire. No. Their ascription is "unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." How could souls just come up out of purgatory, where they have been hundreds, perhaps thousands of years, undergoing the purification of fire, unite in this song?

43. More about Purgatory.

What low and unworthy thoughts the Catholics must have of the work of Christ and of the efficacy of his blood, that they should believe that after he has done all he can for a soul, and his blood has exhausted its virtue on it, it has still to be subjected to the action of an intense flame, for no one knows how long, in order that the expiation of its sins may be complete, and its salvation perfected! What a doctrine! Why, according to this, Christ was premature in saying on the cross, "It is finished." It was not finished. The expiation of sin was only begun on Calvary. It is completed in Purgatory! O God, I pray thee rid and deliver the mind of man from this dreadful delusion, so derogatory to thy dear Son, our blessed Savior; and so injurious to thee, for it represents thee, who delightest in mercy, as punishing after thou hast pardoned; as requiring satisfaction from men, after thou hast accepted for them the satisfaction of Christ!

Now I know the reason why Catholics are never happy in the prospect of death—why the dying votaries of that religion never exclaim, "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" It is because they are expecting to go to a place of fire. How can they be triumphant in the "certain fearful looking for of judgment and *fiery* indignation?" How can their religion be other than what it is, a religion of fear and foreboding.

I have a few more things to say upon this subject; one of them is this: If there was in the time of Christ and his apostles such a place as Purgatory, it must have been a place of little *note* and of little *use*—of

little note, for they say nothing about it—and of little use, because we hear of no one going there. Lazarus did not go there, neither did Dives—nor did the thief who was saved from the cross—nor did Judas. Paul speaks of those Christians who are *absent from the body*, as *present with the Lord*. Is Christ in Purgatory? Is it there that believers go to be ever with him? But hark! a voice from heaven! now we shall know how it is: "I heard a voice from heaven," says St. John, "saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors." They that die in the Lord, *rest*. Then certainly they are not in Purgatory.

If Purgatory is full of souls, who are helped by the prayers of the faithful on earth, as Catholics say, why, in the multitude of their exhortations, do the sacred writers never so much as give us a hint about praying for those poor suffering souls? What a cruel oversight it was in them!

I *smile* sometimes when I look at this doctrine of Purgatory. But I repress the smile. Ludicrous as the doctrine is, it is still more pernicious. What does it do, that is so bad? Why, it turns away the attention of the soul from Christ. It says the very opposite of "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And then it tells men that they may not only live, but die wickedly, and yet entertain the hope of salvation. It proclaims the possibility of a *post-mortem* repentance and purification from sin. It emboldens men to go out of the world in impenitence, assuring them that though they do, yet prayers and masses offered for them after death can save

them. It denies that we are to be judged and dealt with according to the deeds *done in the body;* whereas, the Bible declares that according to these, we are to receive.

On the whole, for this doctrine of Purgatory there is neither Scripture, nor reason, nor common sense. This, however, *may* be said of it. It is a *profitable* doctrine. Yes, a *capital speculation.* There is no doctrine which pays so well. You have heard of *Peter's pence.* Here his boasted successors get their *pounds.*

---

44. A Strange Thing.

I read the other day in a Baltimore newspaper the following article:

"OBSEQUIES.—This day the Prelates and Theologians of the Catholic Provincial Council, now in session in this city, together with several other priests, celebrated the solemn office for the repose of the souls of the Right Rev. Doctor Fenwick, of Cincinnati, and De Neker, of New Orleans. The Right Rev. Doctor Rosati celebrated the High Mass, attended by the proper officers. After the Gospel, the Right Rev. Doctor Purcell, Bishop of Cincinnati, ascended the pulpit and preached a funeral Oration; in which he ably portrayed, in accurate and pathetic language, the virtues and services of the deceased prelates, the former of whom fell a victim to the cholera, after years of laborious and successful exertions; the latter was taken away in the bloom of youth and in the midst of his labors by the yellow fever. After the Mass, Doctor Rosati performed the usual obsequies."

Having finished reading the article, I withdrew the paper from my eye and I said to myself, Where am

I? I thought I was in the United States of America. But that cannot be. This can be no other than Spain, Portugal, or Italy. And what *century* is this? I always thought that I lived in the glorious *nineteenth*. But I must have made a mistake of *nine* at the very least. This surely must be the *tenth* century; the darkest of the dark ages—seculum tenebricosum, as the church historians call it—the *midnight of time! this day* the Prelates——*in this city*——celebrated the solemn office for the *repose*, &c.

Just then it occurred to me that I might have read the paragraph incorrectly. So I resumed the paper; but still it read the same. Then I threw it down, and I sat and thought: Well now, this is a strange thing—an extraordinary piece of business—praying for the repose of deceased saints!—and those, too, prelates of the only true church—and prelates eminent for their "virtues and services"—dead a year, or thereabouts, and yet not at *rest!*—and this by confession of their own church! What must become of the less renowned Catholics, if the very best of their bishops are tossing and burning in purgatory a year after having sacrificed their lives in the service of God and their fellow-creatures; and need *solemn offices* said for the repose of their souls? I always thought that *rest* to the soul ensued immediately on the exercise of faith. Paul says, "we which have believed, *do* enter into rest;" and Christ says, "come unto me, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you and learn of me——and ye shall find rest unto your souls." I always supposed it meant that they should find the rest as soon as they came; and not after a long life, and a long purgatorial period subsequent to that. But above all, I had got the

impression that, if never before, yet in the grave, good men find rest. I must have contracted that belief, I suppose, by reading what St. John says, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord *from henceforth*: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest," &c. or possibly I got it from that other passage, "there the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary *are at rest*." But it seems I am wrong. Here are two bishops dead, yet not at rest! If what St. John says is true, here is a dilemma. Either those bishops did not die in the Lord, or they are at rest. Will the prelates say that they did not die in the Lord? I suspect not. Then they must believe that they are at rest. And if so, why celebrate the solemn office for their repose?

Hoping it may not be a *mortal* sin, (if it be only *venial*, I will risk it,) I would ask how the Catholics know that these bishops of theirs are not at rest? Who told them so? Where did they learn it? It seems to me a *slander* on those men. Bishop Fenwick enjoyed an enviable reputation for goodness. I have often heard him spoken of by Protestants in terms of high commendation; and the article quoted speaks of "the virtues and services" of both. And now, after they have been dead so long, to tell the world that they are not at rest, and that their repose must be prayed for! If Protestants had dared to suggest such a thing about them, we should never have heard the last of it.

But it seems not only a slander on those men, but also a *reflection* on Christ. How imperfectly, according to the Catholics, he must have done his work! that even those esteemed his most devoted servants must lie, and toss, and burn, nobody knows how long,

after death, before the efficacy of his atonement will allow of their being taken to heaven! And where is the fulfillment of his promise, "Come unto me and I will give you rest. Ye shall find rest to your souls?" According to the prelates, &c. these bishops have not found it yet.

I would *dare* ask another question. How is it that the priests and prelates can tell with so much accuracy how long a soul remains in purgatory before it is released? How do they know just when to stop praying? I will not insinuate that they pray as long as the money holds out, and no longer; for in the case of the bishops, I suppose they *freely* give their prayers. I could not help thinking, if they did go first to purgatory, yet they may not be there so long as this. A year is a long time to be in purgatory. Hours pass slowly away while one is burning. O, is this a part of Christianity? Can it be? What an unsatisfactory religion, which will not allow its most eminent examples, its most virtuous votaries, to have repose even in the grave! Credat qui vult, non ego.

---

45. Canonizing Saints.

I was a good deal struck the other day in reading, in a Baltimore paper, the following notice: "On Monday, the 17th of March, St. Patrick's day, a solemn HIGH MASS will be sung in St. Patrick's church, Fell's Point, and the panegyric of the Saint will be

delivered." It suggested some thoughts which I beg leave to communicate.

Why should the 17th of March be called St. Patrick's day? How is it his day more than yours or mine? What property had he in it more than others? He died on that day, it is true. But was he the only one that died on that day. Many thousands must have died on the same day. Does a man's dying on a particular day make it his? Ah, but he was a *saint*. How is that ascertained? Who saw his heart? I hope he was a good man, and a renewed person. But I think we ought to be cautious how we so positively pronounce our fellow creatures saints. Especially should Catholics, since even *Peter* himself, though, as they affirm, infallible, did not express himself so confidently, for he says in his first epistle, 5th chap. and 12th verse, of Silvanus, "a faithful brother unto you, *as I suppose*."

But what if he was a saint; every real Christian is a saint. If any one doubts this, let him consult any part of the New Testament. I trust there were many saints on earth at that time; and I doubt not that other saints died on that day as well as Patrick. I object altogether to the day being called his. I have no idea that the 365th portion of every year belongs peculiarly to St. Patrick. I have no notion of this parceling out the year among the saints, and calling one day St. Patrick's, and another St. Cecilia's, and so on. At this rate we shall have the whole year appropriated to dead saints.

Ah, but you forget that Patrick was *canonized*. The church made him a saint, and appropriated that day to him. But I have not much opinion of these

canonized saints—the saints of human manufacture. I like the *sanctified* ones better. Our Protestant saints are "God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." But granting the 17th of March to be St. Patrick's day, why is it *kept?* What have we to do with it, who live so long after? Patrick died in 493, and here in the 19th century they are keeping his day! I think it is time to have done grieving for the death of St. Patrick, now that he has been dead more than 1300 years, and especially when he died at the good old age of 120. Really, I think it is time that even the *Irish* Catholics had wiped up their tears for him. Tears! why, they do not keep the day in lamentation for him, but in *honor* and praise of him. High mass is to be *sung*, as it appears by the advertisement. Now singing expresses praise—and his *panegyric* is to be pronounced. It is wonderful what a disposition there is among the Catholics to multiply the objects of their religious honor. O that they were but satisfied to praise the Lord that made heaven and earth! But no —they must have *creatures* to do homage unto—angels; and saints of their own making; and above all, the blessed Virgin, "our heavenly mother," as some of them call her. It would really seem as if they had rather pay respect to any other being than God! They cannot be satisfied with the mediation of Jesus. They must have creatures to mediate and intercede for them. They are always doing things, and keeping days in honor of the saints. How much they talk about *tutelar saints* and *guardian angels*. It would appear as if they had rather be under the care of any other beings than God!

Now the idea of still eulogizing, panegyrizing, and

praising, here in these United States, one St. Patrick who died in Ireland in 493, how absurd! How is piety to be promoted by it. I should like to know!

By the way, what is *high* mass in distinction from *low* mass? They differ in several respects. Among the peculiarities of high mass, this, I believe, is one, that it is more *expensive* than low mass. If you want high mass said for a poor suffering soul in purgatory, you have to pay more than you do if you are content with low mass. And so it should be, for the high mass is worth more. Low mass scarcely makes an impression on a soul in purgatory. It is high mass that does the business effectually and expeditiously.

As for us Protestants, we have nothing to do with these masses. We do not find any thing said about them in the Bible. The Catholic will pardon me, I hope, for alluding to the Bible. I am aware that it is no good authority with him, except now and then a verse, (entirely misunderstood,) such as that about the *rock*, which they say was *Peter*, on whom the church was built, according to them! Only think now, a man that denied the *founder* of Christianity three times with profane oaths, himself the *foundation* of the whole church! Nothing else for it to rest upon but Peter! But the beauty of it is that this foundation should have had a long series of *fundamental* successors, down to the present Pope! I always supposed that when a foundation is laid, there is an end of it and that all after belongs to the superstructure. But this is a digression. I was speaking of us Protestants, that we reject masses. And so we acknowledge no distinction of days, but *the Lord's day*. We keep no saint's days. We keep the Lord's day. It is almost

the only day that some Catholics do *not* keep religiously! They are so busy with their saint's days, that they quite overlook the day which "the Lord hath made."

It strikes me that in giving this notice, the priests should have used an easier word than *panegyric*. I wonder how many of our Irish brethren know what it means. But "ignorance is the mother of devotion," you know, is one of their maxims. What multitudes of them said, on the 17th of March, "blessed St. Patrick." Probably many more than said "Hallowed be thy name." And every day how much more respect is paid among them to the *mother* than to the *Son!* It is as clear as demonstration can make any thing, that the Catholic religion is *idolatrous*. Men may say that it is a very *uncharitable* remark. But if any one will dare to say it is an *untrue* remark, I am ready to meet him. Let us inquire *first*, what is *truth*. *Then* we will come to the question, what is *charity*. And we shall find that charity is something which "rejoices in the truth."

---

46. Gen. Lafayette not at Rest.

A few days since I observed the following notice, taken from the Charleston Roman Catholic Miscellany: "There will be an office and high mass in the Cathedral on Monday, 30th inst. (June,) for the repose of the soul of General Lafayette." Also the

following, taken from the Catholic Herald: "A solemn high mass will be sung on Tuesday next, the 29th inst. (July,) at 10 o'clock, at the church of the Holy Trinity, corner of Sixth and Spruce, for the repose of the soul of the late Gen. Lafayette." The General died, it will be remembered, on the 20th of May. I did not know that he had been heard from since, any more than the rest of the dead. But the Charleston and Philadelphia editors seem to have had accounts of him up to as late a date as the 29th of July. Forty days after his death, according to the one account, and sixty-nine days according to the other, his soul was not at rest; and they give notice that measures are about to be taken to procure its repose. I don't know where they got it. They do not say through what channel the intelligence came. They are very positive, however, in regard to the fact. I have often been surprised at the confidence with which Catholics make assertions, implying a knowledge of the condition of souls beyond the grave. One would suppose they had a faculty, peculiar to themselves, of seeing into the invisible world. With what positiveness they speak of this one and that other as saints in glory, and even pray to them as such. I have often thought that many of the prayers of Catholics might be lost from the circumstance of the persons to whom they are addressed not being in heaven.

We Protestants do not lose any prayer in that way. We do not pray to any being who we are not certain is in heaven. We speak with positiveness of the future condition of characters and classes of men—the righteous and the wicked—believers and unbelievers. The Bible does that. But we *do* not, we *dare* not

speak of the condition of individuals with the same confidence; and especially dare we not say of this or that person that has died, that his soul is not at rest. We think it better to be silent concerning the spirit that has returned to God who gave it, and wait for the great day to disclose the decision of the eternal mind on its case, and that especially if the person seemed to die in impenitence. We would not usurp the place and prerogative of judgment. What Protestant, even though belonging to the class of Calvinists, as some of us do, would intimate that the soul of such a man as Lafayette is not at rest?

But the Catholics are not so reserved. They pretend to know not only who are saints in glory, but what souls are suffering in the fire and restlessness of purgatory. They can tell you the names of the persons. They have printed in two of their papers, at least, that the *good* Lafayette, as our countrymen are wont to speak of him, has not gone to rest. His body rests; but his soul, they tell us, has as yet found no repose. It has not obtained admittance into that place where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." The General lived a long time where the wicked cease *not* from troubling; and much annoyance received he from them, in the course of his patriotic and useful life; and many trials and fatigues he underwent for liberty and the rights of man. Now it seems to me the Catholics take a great deal on them, when they say that his soul is still subject to the annoyances and disquiet which were his lot on earth. Yet they do say so. They appoint a day, a good while after his death, to sing high mass for the repose of his soul. Of course they must believe that

up to that day his soul is not in repose, else why seek its repose? If the person who inserted these notices were living in the papal dominions, or under the influence of Prince Metternich, or the ex-king Charles, I should not wonder at their proclaiming his soul not at rest, for Lafayette was never a favorite at Rome, Vienna, or in the court of Charles X. He loved liberty too well for that. But that American Catholics, and, if the reader will not smile at the incongruity of the terms to each other, *republican Catholics*, should assert such a thing of him, I am a little surprised. I almost wonder that the people do not resent it as an insult to the old general. If a Protestant minister should say from the pulpit, or through the press, that Lafayette is not at rest, his church and his person would be hardly safe. But the Catholics do it with impunity. And let them. All the penalty I would have them suffer, is the contempt of every intelligent mind.

But why do the Catholics suppose that Lafayette is not at rest? Is it because none are at rest when they die? Is this their doctrine? A comfortable religion to be sure! According to this, how is it "gain to die?" Who would be "willing rather to be absent from the body?" Or how can it be said, "O death where is thy sting?" since *here* it is, and sting enough. But he who wrote, Phil. 1, and 1 Cor. 15, and 2 Cor. 5, was not a Catholic. Or do they conclude Lafayette to be not at rest, because only saints find repose in death, and he was no saint? I wish all the saints of the church of Rome had been as good men as Lafayette. They have canonized worse men than he. I have never inquired curiously into the devotional character of the

general, but I am possessed of no proof that he was not a Christian. Certainly, I find in his moral history no reason why they should be so positive that he is not at rest. They might have made the appointment conditional, I should think—mass to be said for the repose of his soul, provided it be not at rest. But they insert no condition. They are sure he is not at rest.

Well, if he is not at rest, how are their masses to give him repose? Does the Bible say that they have that efficacy? I must be excused for being so old-fashioned as to appeal to the Bible. That book, since it says nothing about masses, cannot be supposed to say anything of their *tranquilizing* tendency. I always forget that the Catholics have another source of information on religion besides the Bible. Tradition they call it. They mean by it the *talk* of inspired men, when they had no pen in their hands; which being heard, was reported, and so has come along down by word of mouth. But I, for my part, am satisfied with what they *wrote*.

We, Protestants, cannot join the Roman Catholics in their solemn office for Lafayette. We hope there is no *need* of praying for the repose of his soul; and we are certain there is no *use* in it. We prayed for him while he was *living*. We did not wait for him to be dead first. Now that his spirit has returned to God who gave it, and the Judge has passed upon it, we leave it there. By the way, how do the Catholics know when to stop praying for the repose of a soul? The Charleston Catholics had their mass for him on the 30th of June. But it seems it was of no avail, for the Philadelphia Catholics are called together to sing theirs on the 29th of July. How long is this thing

to go on? I am writing on the 31st of July. Is he at rest now? Was the mass of the 29th inst. more efficacious than that of the 30th ult.? Perhaps the next news from New-York will be that mass is to be performed there for the repose of the same soul some day in August. I hope the church is not *infallible* in regard to Lafayette, as in other matters. I should be sorry to think him all this time *not at rest*.

I remember an old Latin maxim, "Nil de mortuis, nisi bonum," say nothing but good respecting the dead—which, it seems to me, the Catholics have disregarded in the case of Lafayette. It is certainly not saying any good of a dead man, to say that he is not at rest. And it is *cruel* to *sing* about it. The Philadelphia mass was *sung*. Is it kind to treat a suffering soul in purgatory with singing?

---

47. Prayers for the Faithful Departed.

I have taken up again that little book, "The Christian's Guide to Heaven," published, as the title page assures us, with the approbation of the most reverend Archbishop of Baltimore. Parts of it I have heretofore reviewed, but I have not exhausted its contents. I find on page 198 of my edition, the title of this article, "Prayers for the Faithful Departed." Faithful, said I to myself; and is it for the *faithful* dead that they pray? I was so ignorant as to suppose that it was for wicked Catholics, being dead, they were so

good as to pray. I thought there was no need of praying for deceased *Christians*—for the *faithful* departed. I got the notion somewhere, that good people, when they die, go where there is "fullness of joy," and "pleasures forevermore." I may have imbibed it from St. Paul, who says that when such are "absent from the body," they are "present with the Lord;" or perhaps I caught it from St. John, who speaks of the dead that die in the Lord, as "blessed from henceforth," and as resting from their labors. It is more likely, however, that I got the idea from our Saviour, who says to the church in Smyrna, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." It was natural that I should take up the idea in reading this, that prayers for the faithful departed were needless, since he says, if they were faithful *unto* death they should receive a crown of life. We are all liable to mistakes, that is, unless we are *infallible*. It seems, according to the Catholics, who profess to know all about these matters, that the faithful don't get the crown of life by being faithful *unto* death. No, they must be faithful a good while after death, before they receive it. That which they get at death is very different from the crown of life. They are a long time absent from the body before they are present with the Lord. They don't go to heaven, or paradise. They go to purgatory. This is the Catholic's creed. It don't seem to agree altogether well with the Savior's promise to the Smyrneans. A simple man would suppose that fidelity unto death was immediately followed by the crown of life. But they that *cannot err* tell us otherwise.

Somehow or other this doctrine of the faithful going

to purgatory after death, and needing to be prayed out of it, seems to have been always out of the mind of the apostle Paul, when he had his pen in his hand, or was dictating to the amanuensis. He speaks of it as *gain* to die; but surely, to exchange earth for purgatory is no gain. *Air*, however impure or sultry, is more agreeable than the element of *fire*. He tells of his desire to depart and be with Christ, just as if the one immediately followed the other. He overlooked purgatory; otherwise I think he would not have had the desire to depart. Perhaps he thought he would fare as well as Lazarus, who made no stop in purgatory; or as the penitent thief, who could not have made a long one, since he was in Paradise the same day he died. It has always appeared to me, that according to the Catholic system, this man, of all others, should have gone to purgatory. He never did any penance on earth—never bought an indulgence—he repented only a few minutes before he died; and yet he goes direct to paradise! Who then may not?

But do they not give us *chapter and verse* for praying for the dead! It must be confessed they do. Here it is. "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosened from their sins." 2 Macb. 12: 46. This *looks* like Scripture, though it does not *sound* much like it. It passes for Scripture with the Catholics; but it is *Apocrypha*. It is no more holy Scripture than the Koran is. I know the Catholics contend that it is as good Scripture as any. But ask the Jews if it is Scripture. "*Unto them* were committed the oracles of God." Ask them if the books of Maccabees were committed to them. They tell you no. They were not even written in

Hebrew. The New Testament abounds in quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures. I wonder some of the writers of the New Testament had not quoted Maccabees, if it had been Scripture. I would ask any one who reads it, if it strikes the ear as Scripture. It certainly does not. Besides, it is not in all cases *good sense.* The verse quoted in favor of praying for the dead is not good sense. They speak of praying for the dead as a *holy thought*, and of prayer as having an efficacy to *loosen* them *from their sins.* Now any child can see this to be no part of Scripture.

But I hasten to the prayer. "A prayer for the suffering souls in purgatory." It is a curious prayer. I should like to quote the whole of it. But some specimens must suffice. Here is one petition. "Have mercy on those who suffer in purgatory. Look with compassion on the greatness of their torments; they are more keenly devoured by their ardent desire of being united to thee, than by the purging flames wherein they are plunged." Observe, here are *spirits* in *flames;* and they are *purging* flames. Fire may refine and purify certain metals, but how it should act in that way on *souls*, is beyond my comprehension. The suffering occasioned by fire is very horrible; but it seems that it is nothing compared with what they suffer from the love of God, or the "ardent desire of being united to him." I wonder, if they have such desires after God, that they are kept in that suffering state. I wonder he does not take them up to himself. Why should they suffer so, since Christ has suffered for them, and they are the faithful who believe on him? Did not Christ suffer enough? But the prayer proceeds: "With them I adore thy

avenging justice." So it seems the faithful are the objects of God's avenging justice. I always thought that justice exacted its full demand of Christ. I don't know what the *Apocrypha* says about it, but holy Scripture informs me that God can now be *just*, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus; and that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and *just* to forgive them. Are not the faithful pardoned; and how is pardon consistent with vengeance?

The prayer goes on thus: "Remember, O Lord, thou art their Father, and they are thy children. Forget the faults, which, through the frailty of human nature, they have committed against thee." Then a little farther on: "Remember, O Lord, that they are thy living members, thy faithful followers, thy spouses." Here you see these sufferers are God's children; and they are suffering for mere *faults*, which they fell into through *frailty*. This seems hard. But they are not only God's children; they are Christ's living members, his faithful followers, his spouses; and he died for them—and yet there they are *burning*—pardoned, yet suffering punishment—interested in the satisfaction of Christ, yet making satisfaction for themselves—paying over again the penalty which the Savior discharged. And this is the Catholic gospel! Is it not "another gospel?" And yet "not another." It is *no* gospel. *It is a contradiction of the good news.*

I quote but one more petition: "Deliver them, O most merciful God, from that place of darkness and torture, and call them to a place of refreshment, light and peace." The reader will remember that this prayer is for the *faithful*. It is they who, having

been "faithful unto death," go to a place of darkness and torture. There they "*rest* from their labors." I don't know, for my part, what worse can befall *unbelievers* than this. Truly, here is no great encouragement to believing. What a consolitary doctrine this to break in the ear of a dying disciple! Fear not, be of good cheer, thou art but going to the place of "darkness and torture." Can it be Jesus who says this to his faithful followers? Can this be *Christian* doctrine? It certainly is not well calculated to make dying easy. With such a prospect before them, I do not wonder that Catholics find it hard to die—verily death has a sting, and the grave a victory, if the Catholic doctrine of purgatory be true.

---

48. An Improvement.

I always hail improvements. I am always glad to see things taking a turn for the better, even though the improvement be slight. We must not despise the day of small things. Rome was not built in a day, nor will she be overthrown in a day. A system that it took centuries to introduce, cannot be expected to pass away all at once. Even if the improvement be only in phraseology, I rejoice in it, because words not only signify ideas, but sometimes generate them; so that from using right words, men not unfrequently pass to holding correct ideas on subjects.

The improvement to which I refer relates to phra-

seology merely. The case is this. It is the habit among the Catholics, some few months or so after a considerable character dies, to open the church and have a service for him. This has heretofore been announced thus: "High mass will be said or sung for the repose of the soul of such a one, at such a time" —not, the reader will understand, because the soul is at rest, but that it may be at rest. The service is not eucharistic, but supplicatory. This, I observed, was done in the case of a recent western bishop, and also in the case of Gen. La Fayette, who, some months after he had died, was discovered not to be at rest. Now, a short time ago the Archbishop of Baltimore died; and weeks having passed away, the time came to take notice of his soul. Accordingly it was done. But I was struck with the alteration in the wording of the notice. It ran thus: "A funeral service will be performed in the cathedral for the late Most Rev Archbishop Whitfield." This is certainly better than the old way of announcing it. To be sure, it sounds odd to talk of a funeral service for one who was regularly buried some months before. Protestants cannot readily understand it. But waiving this, why the change of phraseology? The best explanation I can give of it is this: The Catholics see that the public sense of the community, though sufficiently in their favor, will not tolerate a thing of this kind without a degree of restlessness, not a little annoying to them, and perhaps likely to be injurious to their concern. For see, that reasoning animal, man, who is naturally a logician, and can reason without ever having studied the rules of reasoning, argues something like this: Either the soul for which the mass is said is at rest, or it

is not at rest. If it is at rest, it is preposterous to pray for its repose. It is asking that that may be done which has been done already. When a thing is done, to pray for it is superfluous. Then is the time to give thanks. If, on the other hand, the soul is not at rest, then common sense, which is no fool, asks why they put off the mass so long—why they did not begin to pray for the repose of the soul sooner. It was not kind in them. And common sense, which is also a great querist, inquires how they know the soul did not go immediately to rest; or if it did not, how they know it is not at rest weeks and months after. Common sense, not finding any thing about it in the Bible, wants to know how the Catholics get the information. And so, through fear of the investigation of common sense, they change the phraseology of the notice. It is wise. Well may the authorities of the Roman Catholic church stand in dread of common sense. I do not know any more formidable foe of error and imposition. I confidently look forward to the overthrow of the Catholic religion; and I expect a great deal of the work of its destruction will be done by common sense. I have not the dread, which some have, that this religion is going to overrun our country, and rise to dominion here. There is too much common sense abroad in the length and breadth of the land to allow of such a result. The people of the United States will *think*, and they have a notion that they have a right to think for themselves, without sending to Rome to know if they may. And they will ask questions on subjects, not omitting religion, and they will insist on having a satisfactory answer. The inhabitants of the old world may, if they please, believe on

the *ipse dixit* of the Pope, but we of the new, before we yield our assent, require a "Thus saith the Lord," or a "quod erat demonstrandum," or something of that nature. You can never get a majority here to believe in contradiction of the five senses. They will stick to it that a thing is what they see and feel and taste it to be—in other words, that bread is bread

---

49. The Duke of Brunswick's Fiftieth Reason

A certain Duke of Brunswick, having many years ago abjured Lutheranism, and become a Catholic, thought it necessary to apologize to the world for his change of religion. It needed an apology. So he wrote down *fifty reasons* to justify the course he had pursued, and had them printed in a little book, which is entitled "Fifty Reasons why the Roman Catholic religion ought to be preferred to all others." This book the Catholics have free permission to read. O yes—they may read any book but the Bible. There is no objection to their reading books which contain *the thoughts of men;* but the book which contains *the thoughts of God* is interdicted! *Men* know how to express themselves. *Men* can write intelligibly. But. . . . ! !

Fifty reasons! The Duke must have been conscious, I suppose, that his reasons were *weak*, otherwise he would have been satisfied with a less number than fifty. Why does a man want fifty reasons for a thing

when *one* good reason is sufficient? *I* have but one general reason for not being a Catholic, and I consider that enough. It is *that the Catholic religion is not the religion of the Bible.* It is not the religion which Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Jude, and *Peter* wrote about, as any one may see who will compare the Holy Scriptures with the Council of Trent. But you see, the Duke, feeling that he had not one *good* reason for turning Catholic, gives us fifty *poor* ones; thinking to make up for the weakness of his reasons by the number of them; and calculating that fifty poor reasons would certainly be equivalent to one good one.

Fifty reasons! I shall not now inquire what the *forty-nine* were. But what do you think the sapient Duke's *fiftieth* reason was—his closing, crowning reason—that with which he capped the climax—the reason which, having brought out, he *rested* from very exhaustion, consequent on the amazing effort of mind by which it was excogitated?

The fiftieth reason! I will give it to you in his own words, which I quote from an edition of his reasons, published by one of the very best Catholics in the land, so that there can be no mistake about it. After going on about something else, he says, "Besides that, the Catholics, to whom I spoke concerning my salvation, assured me that, if I were to be damned for embracing the Catholic faith, they were ready to answer for me *at the Day of Judgment*, and to take my damnation upon themselves; an assurance I could never extort from the ministers of any sect, in case I should live and die in their religion. From whence I inferred, the Roman Catholic faith was built on a better

foundation than any of those sects that have divided from it." Prodigious!—and there he stops. I think it was time.

I do not know whether to make any comment on this reason or not. Sometimes comment is unnecessary, and even injurious. I wonder the Catholics are not ashamed of this reason. Indeed, I suspect the intelligent ones among them do blush for it, and wish the Duke had stopped at forty-nine.

But let us look at it a minute. It seems the Duke was won over by the generosity of the Catholics. They agreed that if he were to be damned for embracing their faith, (they admit the possibility that he might be; whereas, the Protestant ministers whom he consulted were too well assured of the truth of their religion to allow of the supposition,) they would take his place, and be damned for him. Now I wonder the Duke had not reflected—(but there are stupid Dukes—this was a nobleman, but not one of nature's noblemen)—that those very Catholics, who made him this generous offer, if their faith was false, would have to be damned for themselves! That which should leave him without a title to heaven, would equally leave them without one. I wonder the Duke so readily believed that the substitution would be accepted. What if they were willing to suffer perdition in his place! The *Judge* might object to the arrangement. What ignorance and stupidity it manifests, to suppose that one may suffer in hell for another, just as one serves in the army for another! What an idea such persons must have of the nature of future punishment, to suppose that it is transferable! I should like to know how one man is to suffer *remorse* for another. And

again, what an admirable exemplification of the spirit of Christianity, that one should consent, on any condition, to lie in hell, for ever, sinning and blaspheming God! I am sincerely glad that no Protestant minister could be found to give his consent to an eternity of enmity against God. But the Catholics whom the Duke consulted, they loved the Lord so that they were willing to sin against him for ever and ever, with ever-increasing malignity of opposition, for the sake of saving their noble proselyte! "FROM WHENCE I INFERRED," says the Duke, (but you have no *capitals* large enough for this conclusion,) "the Roman Catholic faith was built on a better foundation than any of those sects that have divided from it." Admirable dialectician! He must be *Aristotle* himself, by metempsychosis.

I think that those who wish to live and die Catholics, had better keep their eyes shut. It is the safer way. If they open them almost any where, they will be in danger.

---

50. The Duke's Seventh Reason.

The Duke's *fiftieth* reason has been the subject of an article. Each of his reasons might be made the subject of one, but that would be giving them too much consequence. I have selected the *seventh* for some remarks, because I have several times, in conversation with Catholics, heard it alleged, and some considerable stress laid on it. The drift of it is this: Protestants acknowledge that some Roman Catholics

may be saved, but Catholics contend that no Protestants can be saved. Therefore it is better and safer to be a Catholic, than a Protestant! But, perhaps, I had better let his Serene Highness speak for himself He says: "But what still confirmed me in my resolution of embracing the Roman Catholic faith was this, that the heretics themselves confess Roman Catholics may be saved, whereas, these maintain there is no salvation for such as are out of the Roman Catholic church." Let us examine this reasoning. Catholics *say* that there is no salvation out of their church, and therefore, by all means, we should belong to it. But does their saying so make it so? Is this very *charitable* doctrine of the Catholics of course *true?* Is it so very clear that none are saved but the *greatest bigots*—none saved but those who affirm, and are ready to swear that none others but themselves can be saved? Have Roman Catholics never affirmed any thing but what was strictly true, so that from their uniform veracity and accuracy, we may infer that they must be correct in this statement? Let history answer that question. This is more than we claim even for Protestants. No salvation except for Catholics! Ah, and where is the chapter and verse for that. I don't think that even the Apocrapha can supply them. If subsequent Popes have taught the doctrine, he who is reckoned by Catholics to have been the first Pope, did not. It is rather unkind, perhaps, to quote Peter against his alleged successors, but a regard to truth compels me to do it. It is true, Peter once thought that a person must be an Israelite to be saved, just as our Catholics hold that a person must be a Catholic in order to be saved; but the case of *Corne-*

lius cured him of that prejudice. That led him to say as recorded, Acts 10: 34, 35, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." This sounds a little different from the Duke's premises. It is a little unlike the language of later Popes. They have not taken their *cue* from Peter. Peter was a little of a Catholic at first, but he soon got rid of it.

Now, if what the Catholics say about there being no salvation out of their church, is not true—if there is no Scripture for it, but much against it—if even Peter controverts it, it certainly does not constitute a very good reason for being a Catholic. Suppose that Protestants should give out to the world that none but themselves can be saved, would that make Protestantism any better, or safer, or worthier of adoption? Would our religion be more entitled to reception, if we should publish that *Fenelon* was lost forever, and that *Pascal* was excluded from heaven, and *Masillon* too, just because they were not Protestants, but in communion with the Church of Rome? I think not. Nor can I think that the Roman Catholic religion is entitled to increased respect and veneration, because Catholics assert as an undoubted verity, that such men as *Locke*, *Newton*, *Leighton*, *Howard*, and many others are beyond all question, in hell, not even admitted to purgatory, because, forsooth, they were not Catholics.

But the Duke's inference is from a double premiss. Not only do Catholics say no Protestant can be saved; but Protestants allow that Catholics may. If Protestants were to say that Catholics could not be saved,

then they would be *even* with each other, and there could be no argument in the case. But since Protestants allow that others besides themselves may be saved, while Catholics deny it, therefore the Catholic religion is the safer. See what credit the Catholics give our declarations when they seem to work in their favor. They build a whole argument on one. Why do they not give us equal credence, when we declare that the probability of salvation among Protestants is much greater than among Catholics?

But what is it after all that Protestants allow? They allow that *some* Roman Catholics *may* be saved. They allow that the fact of a person's being externally related to the Catholic church does not of itself shut him out from salvation—that if he believes with his heart in the Lord Jesus, and truly repents of his sins, he will be saved, *though* a Catholic: and that the fact of his being a Catholic, though much against him, does not preclude the possibility of his being a genuine penitent and a true believer. This is the length and breadth of our admission. It admits, as every one must see, not that there is salvation *by* the Catholic religion, but *in spite* of it, to some who professedly adhere to that religion. If a Catholic holds understandingly to the merit of good works, the insufficiency of Christ's sacrifice, the worship of creatures, or similar unscriptural doctrines, we do not see how he can be saved; but we believe many, called Catholics, reject these doctrines in fact, though not perhaps in word, and rely on Christ's atonement alone for salvation. Now if Catholics are so absurd as not to admit in our favor as much as we admit in theirs, we can't help it, and we don't care for it. It is just

as they please. We shall not take back our admission for the sake of making proselytes to Protestantism—and if they can draw off any from us by their exclusive notions, they are welcome to them.

But I must call the reader's attention to the extent of the Duke's inference. He infers the perfect safety of the Catholic religion, because Protestants admit that some Catholics may be saved! But is that a safe spot of which this only can be said that some of the persons occupying it, may possibly escape? And is it madness to occupy any other spot? The Duke exclaims, "What a madness then were it, for any man not to go over to the Roman Catholics, who may be saved in the judgment of their adversaries: but to sort himself with these, who, according to Roman Catholics, are out of the way?" What a madness indeed, not to join a people who may not all be lost! O what a madness to continue to be Protestants, when Roman Catholics say that they are out of the way! What if they do *say* so? What if every *Jesuit* missionary has ever so constantly affirmed? I suppose a Jesuit can say what is not so, as well as any body else. I suppose it is not naturally impossible for one being a Jesuit, I will not say to *lie*, but to *err*. He goes on like a very Aristotle. "Who would not advise a man to take the safest way when he is threatened with any evident danger?" Certainly noble Duke, the safest way; but not of course the way which some say is safest. There are a great many *safest ways*, if all which are said to be safest, are so. But his higness proceeds: "And does not that way which two opposite parties approve of, promise greater security than another which one party only recom-

mends, and which the other condemns?" But that is not so. The two parties do not approve of it. So far from it that the Protestant declares the Catholic way to be an exceedingly dangerous way, while his own way, though pronounced by the Catholic to be fatal, can claim the most respectable testimony that it is the true and safe way. Then comes an illustration, which like a great many other illustrations, is well constructed, but happens to be totally inapplicable to the case in hand, "Who, in fine, can doubt, but that a medicine prescribed by two physicians may be taken with more security than another which one of the two judges may be his death?" How the Duke rolls on his argument! Just now the Protestant only admitted the *possibility* of the Catholic's salvation. Then he is represented as *approving* the Catholic way—and immediately after as *prescribing* it! It is easy proving any thing, if one may make facts to suit his purpose. I believe it is not true that Protestants *prescribe* the Catholic religion to those who ask them what they shall do to be saved.

People must become Catholics, if they please, but I would advise them to look out for better reasons for the change than the Duke of Brunswick's fifty; and especially than this, his seventh. It is a poor reason for becoming a Catholic that they say they are the people, and haughtily bid all others stand by, because they are holier. I cannot think it so great a recommendation of a religion, that it *denounces*, and so far as it can, *damns* all who cannot see their way clear to embrace it.

51. The Duke's Eleventh Reason.

I don't know what is to become of our Protestant religion, with so many reasons against it. I don't know but we shall all have to go back again to the Catholic church, compelled by the *cogency* of argument. *Fifty* reasons why the Roman Catholic religion ought to be preferred to all others! Only think. And some of them that I don't find any answer to in any Protestant writer! Such a one is the *eleventh* of the formidable series. In the three preceding reasons or considerations, as he calls them, the Duke had been giving us the result of his inquiries. It seems he was quite an investigator. He *searched* almost every book but the Scriptures. He looked for what he wanted every where but where the thing was. When a man is inquiring after the truth, and consults the philosophers, the fathers, the martyrs, and all the saints, I cannot see where is the harm of just looking into the prophets, the evangelists, and the apostles too. I don't know why they should be treated with such neglect; I think they are quite as respectable writers as some of the fathers. But be this as it may, the Duke, in his *eighth* consideration, tells us about his consulting the writings of the ancient fathers, to find what they would advise him to do, whether to embrace the Roman Catholic faith or no. And he says they all told him to be a Roman Catholic by all means. Then says he in his *ninth* consideration, "I appealed to the saints of God, and asked them what was the faith they lived in, and by which they arrived at eternal bliss." And they said,

not that they had "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," in accordance with the account given of some other saints in Rev. 7, but "they all made answer, it was the Roman faith." By the way, the Catholics have an advantage over us Protestants. They know just who are saints and have a way of consulting them after they are dead. *We* are not equal to those things. Why, the Duke even tells us the names of those who made answer. "Thus," says he, "I was answered by St. Martin, St. Nicholas, St. Athanasius, and many more among the bishops; among the religious, by St. Dominick (!?) St. Francis, &c. Among the widows, by St. Monica, St. Bridget, St. Elizabeth, &c. Among the virgins, by St. Agatha, St. Lucy, St. Agnes, St. Catharine, &c." I think if a Protestant had had the privilege of cross-examining the above when the Duke consulted them, the result might have been somewhat different. But no Protestant had notice of his intention to carry his inquiries into that quarter. The Duke was determined to make thorough work of it. Therefore, in his *tenth* consideration he tells us: "Then I turned to the holy martyrs, and inquired what faith it was for the truth of which they spilt their blood." They answered it was the Roman Catholic. "This," he says, "I was assured of by thirty-three bishops of Rome, who were crowned with martyrdom; by the saints Cyprian, Sebastian, Laurence; by St. Agatha, St. Cecily, St. Dorothy, St. Barbara, and an *infinite* number of other saints." They all told the same story. "Then," says the Duke, "I *wound up* my argument." But he concluded on the whole, before winding it up, to let it *run down* a little

lower. And this brings us to his *eleventh* reason. The reader will please prepare himself now for a *prostrating* argument. "My next step was in thought to hell, where I found in condemnation to everlasting torments, Simon Magus, Novatus Vigilantius, Pelagius, Nestorius, Macedonius, Marcion, &c." May I never be under the necessity of descending so low for an argument! But the Duke does not say that he *actually* went to the bad place, but he went *in thought*. There, having gone *in thought*, he found so and so. Here is another advantage the Catholics have over us. They know who are in hell. *We* do not. Perhaps some are not there who we may fear are. We do not hold ourselves qualified to judge in these matters. Well, he found them there. He was quite sure not one of them had repented and been saved. And he asked them how they came there, and they very civilly answered that "it was for their breaking off from the Roman Catholic church." Now this is the argument that I have not seen answered by any Protestant writer, as far as I can recollect. I don't read of any Protestant who went even in thought to hell to consult the lost on the points in controversy between us and the Catholics. So that the Catholics have the whole of this argument to themselves. The Duke says they told him they were there for not being Catholics, and we have no counter testimony. Protestantism, however, having so many other "witnesses on the truth" of her system, can easily do without the testimony of "the spirits in prison." Let that be for the Catholics. But by the way, I wonder that the Duke relied so unhesitatingly on the testimony of those persons. How

does he know they told the truth? Are not all such called in Scripture "the children of the devil," and does not every body know his character for veracity? It is certainly an extraordinary answer for one of them, Simon Magus, to give, considering the time when he lived. How could he say with truth that he was there for breaking off from the *Roman* Catholic church, when at the date of his apostacy the Gospel had never been preached at *Rome?* There was no Roman church to break off from.

I was expecting that the Duke would push his inquiries yet one step farther, and, seeing he was on the spot, interrogate Satan in regard to the true religion. But he does not seem to have consulted "the father of lying," but only the children. The truth is, the Devil does not wait to be consulted on that subject, but makes his suggestions to "them that dwell on the earth," without being called on so to do.

I hope the Reformed religion will be able to stand the shock of this argument, notwithstanding the doubt I expressed in the beginning.

---

52. Beauties of the Leopold Reports.

I have been not a little interested with the extracts recently published from the Reports of the Leopold Society in Austria, and it has struck me that I might do some service, especially to those who have not the time or the patience to read long articles, by calling

the attention of the public to the *choice* parts of the reports; for even where all is good, you know, there are generally portions here and there of *superior excellence.* Will you allow me, then, to point out some of the *beauties* of the reports? What has struck me with peculiar force, will probably affect others as forcibly.

Now I have *admired* the way in which the report speaks of *conversions.* It seems that these Catholics can *foresee* conversions with as much certainty as we, poor blind Protestants, can *look back* on them! *F. Baraga* writes, under date of March 10, 1832: "I long for the arrival of spring, when I shall have numerous conversions!!" Now, I am aware that the *face of nature* is renewed when spring appears, but I did not know this was as true of the *souls of men.* It is news to me that conversions can be foreseen with such perfect accuracy. It is hard to foresee what men will do. But here is a foreseeing of what God will do, unless they deny that conversion is his work! But what makes our Catholic brother speak so confidently of the conversions that were to take place? How did he know it? Why, forsooth, some had promised him that they would be converted in the spring. "There are many pagan Indians," he says, "who promised me last summer and fall, that they would in the spring embrace the Christian religion!" This beats all. Why, if they were convinced of the truth of the Christian religion, did they not embrace it at once? Why put it off till after the 1st of March? But not only had some promised him on their honor that they would be converted, but he says: "From two other counties I have received assurances, that many of the Indians there would be converted to the Christian reli-

gion, if I would come and preach the gospel to them!" You see they had told others, who told Baraga, that they would. It came very *straight*. He speaks particularly of a *Christian* Indian who had brought him the intelligence. Now observe, they had never heard a word of the gospel—neither knew what it was, nor how confirmed! Yet they promised to embrace it—promised to believe, and be converted—to have their hearts changed—to be born again! I know that God promises, "A new heart will I give you," but I never knew before that any man, and especially one who had never heard the gospel, could look ahead and say, "at such a time I will have a new heart." Baraga says, "I cannot describe the joy such assurances give me." We Protestants are not so easily made happy by the promises of the unconverted.

Again, I have been struck with the manner in which *Baraga* speaks of the mother of Jesus, under date of July 1, 1832: "When I decided to be a missionary," he says, "I promised *our heavenly mother* that I would consecrate to her the first church I should consecrate among the Indians, for I am convinced she will pray her Son continually for the progress of our missions." *Our heavenly mother!!* Our heavenly *Father* is a phrase dear to every Christian heart; but it is the first time I ever heard we had a heavenly mother. O! O! Will the reader pause a moment and inquire the meaning of the word *idolatry?* Baraga *promised* her? Where had they the interview when that promise was made? He must have been praying to her. And why was the promise made? Because "I am convinced she will pray her Son." What! *prayer* in heaven! John, in Patmos, heard *praise* in

heaven, but not prayer. I know there is one advocate in heaven, Jesus Christ the righteous, who ever liveth to make intercession. That one is enough. But here we are told of another advocate on high—a mediatrix. And she prays *to* her son—mediates between him and sinners. What! Do we need a mediator between us and Christ? I always knew we needed a mediator between God and us; but I supposed we need go directly and immediately to Christ, since he is himself a mediator. Baraga says presently after, "thanks be to Mary, gracious mother, who ever prays for the conversion of the heathen." Now, if all this is not idolatry, I wish some body could tell me what idolatry is. I would as soon undertake to defend the worship of the *golden calf* as this.

Finally, what power these Catholic priests have! Protestant ministers are only "mighty through God." But the priests can succeed without that help. Father Senderl writes: "Young people of sixteen years, and not unfrequently older persons, have never confessed nor communed; (taken the *half sacrament*, I suppose he means.) I prepare them for both, and for confirmation." *I* prepare them! And another writes concerning Baraga, that he *achieves wonders of salvation* among the Ottawas.

This is a specimen of the religion which Prince *Metternich & Co.* our Austrian brethren, those dear lovers of liberty, are benevolently contributing to give us here in America. They are afraid that our *free institutions* will not be permanent unless they help us to prop them up with the Catholic religion! Timeo Metternich et dona ferentem. [I fear Metternich, even sending gifts.]

53. Beauties of the Leopold Reports.

Puerility of the Catholic Religion.

What a *puerile* religion the Catholic religion is! How *childish!* How petty its cares! About what trifles it concerns itself! The Christian is truly "the highest style of man," but the consistent Catholic is not much above the *lowest*. Baraga writes as follows: "It would be of *essential* service to our missions, if there could be sent us cups, boxes for the holy wafer, rosaries, crucifixes—of the last two, as many as possible, for such articles cannot be bought here. How it is with church furniture and linen, you may easily think. Those given to me by pious persons are of great use to me, and I cannot be *thankful enough* for them." Cannot be thankful enough for boxes, rosaries, &c.!! His capacity for gratitude must be small indeed. We Protestants often feel that we cannot be *thankful enough*, but it is not for such *trumpery* as cups and boxes. When we feel and lament over the inadequacy of our gratitude, it is in view of the many and great mercies of God to us. I suppose our Protestant missionaries at Ceylon, and elsewhere, would not be so very grateful if we should send them a consignment of cups, boxes, &c. No: such things could not be of *essential service* to their missions. We do not understand converting people as the Catholics do. They can *regenerate* and *pardon*, and do all the rest in a trice. We have to bring before the *mind* of the sinner the great-saving truth of Christ *crucified;* but they have only to put the little *crucifix* in his *hand*. I went, a short time ago, to visit a man under sentence of death,

to talk to him about Christ and his death. I found him gazing intently on a little metallic image of Christ crucified, which a priest had left him. He seemed indifferent to all I said. The priest had *prepared* him!

In a note to Baraga's letter, we are told of a great number of Catholic *notions* that are already on their way to America; among them three thousand *rosaries!* What a sight of *beads!* How their missions must prosper after this! A little afterwards, by way of inducing others to contribute beads, boxes, &c. it is said: "The good Christian rejoices to promote the external honor of the house of God, so that the inner man, by the splendor of the external divine worship, may be lifted to heaven." What a *sage* sentiment! How *scriptural!* How *philosophical* too! This is truly a new way of being lifted to heaven.

But I must not overlook a letter of Bishop Fenwick, dated *Mackinac*, July 1, 1831. He writes: "On the second day after my arrival, Mr. M. and I preached at different times after mass. When the people had heard some sermons, confessions began; and from that time till the day of our departure, we sat on the *confession stool* from early morning till 1 o'clock, and in the afternoon, from 3 or 4 o'clock, till 10, 11, and twice till 12 at night. There were confessions of twenty, thirty, and forty years." What a prodigious memory they must have had, who called to mind and confessed the sins of forty years! All that time they were waiting for a priest to come along. There was the God who delighted in mercy, to whom they might have confessed, as the publican dared to do; and there was "Jesus the mediator of the new covenant," whom they might at any time have engaged to intercede for them. But

that would not have been to act the part of good Catholics. The good Catholic does not go to the *mercy-seat of God* to confess his sins and obtain forgiveness, (that were an "iniquity to be punished by the judges,") but he waits for the priest to come along with his *confession-stool*. The *confession-stool* substituted in the place of the *mercy-seat!* This is one of the *doings* of that religion which Austria wants to give us. God says to sinners, "Come unto me," and he promises that he will "abundantly pardon them from his throne of grace." "Nay," says the priest, "wait till I come with my little stool." Catholics may, if they please, go for pardon and mercy to the *stool of confession*—but, my Protestant brethren, "Let us come boldly unto the *throne of grace*, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

---

54. Partiality of the Church of Rome

There is nothing of which I am more perfectly certain than that the religion of the church of Rome is not the religion of Jesus Christ. I do not care to say what it is—but it is not Christianity. How can they be the same, when they differ so widely? Midnight and noon are not more unlike. I will specify one point of difference. Romanism is *partial*. She is a respecter of persons. Christianity is the very opposite of this. And not only is the church of Rome partial, but her partialities are all in favor of the rich. Now

Christianity, if it leans in any direction, inclines towards the poor. It was one sign that the Messiah was come in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, that "the poor had the Gospel preached to them." They were not overlooked; far from it. "Hearken," says one, "hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him." The poor had never such a friend as Christ. He was himself poor. He had experience of the privations, cares, and sorrows of that condition. So poor was he that he had not where to lay his head. No lodging-place at night had he in all that world which his word created and his hand sustained. The poor are peculiarly his brethren.

And think you, then, that he has opened a wider door of entrance into heaven to the rich than to the poor? Think you that he has connected with the condition of the rich man an advantage whereby he may sooner or more easily obtain admittance into the place of his glorious presence? I do not believe it. But this is what the church of Rome teaches. She preaches better tidings to the rich than to the poor—Christ did not. But I must make good this charge against the church of Rome. I do it thus: According to her creed, all souls, except, perhaps, now and then one, of every condition, go, on their leaving the body, to purgatory. There they are. Now to get them out. How does she say that is to be done? Why, they must either suffer out their time, (that is, all the time which remains after subtracting all the indulgences that were purchased and paid for,) or their release must be effected by the efficacy of prayers and masses said for them by the faithful on earth. You remember that mass was per-

formed lately by the Catholic congress assembled in Baltimore, for the repose of the souls of two deceased bishops. There is no other way. Christ's sacrifice does not give rest to the soul, according to the Catholics, unless the sacrifice of the mass be added to it! Well, how are these masses, so necessary to the repose and release of the soul, to be had? Why, how do you suppose, but by *paying for them!* Give the priests money, and they will say them. At any rate, they promise that they will. Now, do you not see the advantage which money gives a man in the church of Rome, and the hardships of being a poor Catholic? I wonder any poor man should think the Catholic religion the religion of Christ. Verily, Popery is no religion for poverty. What did our Savior mean, when he said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?" According to the Catholic doctrine, they are the very men that enter most easily—they having the wherewith to purchase indulgences and masses. It is the poor according to this scheme, that with difficulty enter in. They have to serve their time out in purgatory—whereas, the rich can buy their time off.

But is the thing managed in this way? Are not masses said for all that die in the Catholic faith? Yes, there is a day in the year called All-soul's day, (it comes on the 2d of November. Alas for the poor Catholic who dies on the 3d, for he has to wait a whole year for a mass,) when all of them are prayed for. The poor share in the benefit of the masses said on that day; but what does it amount to, when you consider the millions of Catholics that die every year, and the many millions not yet out of the fire, among

whom the benefit is to be divided? It is not like having a mass said for one's soul in particular. But that is the privilege of the rich.

Now I do not believe that it is the religion of the blessed Jesus that makes this distinction in favor of the rich. I believe that Christ brought as good news from heaven to the poor as to the rich. I believe that every blessing which he has to dispose of may be bought *without money and without price.* See Isa. 55: 1. I believe that "whosoever will," may "take of the water of life freely." Rev. 22: 17. This is my creed.

There was poor Lazarus. I reckon he went to heaven as soon after he died as he would have done if he had had millions of money to leave to the church; and I reckon the angels were as tender and careful of his soul as if he had been clothed in purple and fared sumptuously every day. And he was a poor man to whom the dying Savior said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." If there was ever a man who, according to the Catholic doctrine, should have gone to purgatory, and remained a great while there, it was that thief. But you see he did not go there. Christ took him with him immediately to paradise. He went there without penance, without *extreme unction*, without *confession to a priest*, without a single mass being said for him, in utter outrage of all the rules of the church! I don't think that Joseph of Arimathea, rich as he was, could have got to heaven sooner than that penitent thief. But Christ always considered the poor; and that is not Christianity which does not consider them.

As I said in former pieces that I had no faith in

salvation by fire, or in salvation by oil, I say now I have no faith in salvation by *money*.

I will close with a syllogism. Christianity makes it as easy for a poor man to get to heaven, as for one that is rich. This is my *major* proposition. Who dare dispute it? But the church of Rome makes it not so easy for a poor man to get to heaven as one that is rich. This is my *minor* proposition, and this I have shown. Who dare deny it? Now my *conclusion* is, therefore, the religion of the church of Rome is not Christianity.

---

55. Supererogation.

This long word was coined by the Catholics for their own special use, as was also that longer and harder word *transubstantiation*. Nobody else finds any occasion for it. It expresses what the rest of mankind think has no real existence. If the reader is acquainted with the *Latin*, (that language which the church of Rome extols so high above the Hebrew and Greek, the languages of God's choice—and in which she says we ought all to say our prayers, whether we know it or not,) he will see that supererogation is compounded of two words, and signifies literally *above what is required*. It designates that *overwork* in the service of God which certain good Catholics in all ages are supposed to have done. After doing all the good which God requires of them,

then what they do *over and above* that, they call *supererogation*. It expresses how much more they love God than they are required to love him. He claims, you know, to be loved with all the heart, and soul, and strength, and mind. This is the first and great command. And observe, it is with *all* of each. Now, when the Catholic has fully satisfied this claim, he enters upon the work of supererogation; and all that he does in the way of loving God after loving him with *all the four*, heart, strength, soul, and mind, is set down to this account, be it more or less. Might I just ask here, for information, if a man is required to love God with *all his strength*, that is, with his *whole ability*, how *can* he do more? It seems that whatever he *can* do, is required to be done. How Catholics contrive to do more than they can, I, for my part, do not know. It is a mystery to Protestants. We are in the dark on this subject.

Let me tell you more about this supererogation. It expresses how much more Catholics are than *perfect*. Perfect, you know, we are all required to be—perfect, "even as our Father who is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5 : 48. And in another place, even by *Peter* it is said, "As he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." Now, when one is holy as he who hath called him is holy, and holy in *all* manner of conversation, in so far as he is more holy than this, since this is all that is *required*, the surplus is set down to the account of supererogation! In other words, supererogation expresses the superfluous glory which men give to God, after glorifying him in their bodies and spirits, which are his, and doing *all* whatsoever they do, even to the matter of eating

and drinking, to his glory! See 1 Cor. 6 : 27, and Acts 10 : 31. This is supererogation. I hope the reader understands it.

Now, those who do these works of supererogation, have of course more merit than they have any occasion for on their own account; and as this excess of merit ought by no means to be lost, the church of Rome has with great economy treasured it up for the benefit of those who are so unfortunate as to do *less* than what is required, to whom it is, at the discretion of the church, and for value received, served out in the way of *indulgences.* This is the article that Tetzel was dealing in so largely and lucratively, when one Martin Luther started up in opposition to the traffic. Protestants have never dealt in the article of indulgences.

By the way, the wise virgins of whom we read in Matthew, 25, seem not to have been acquainted with this doctrine of supererogation; for when the foolish virgins, in the lack of oil, applied to them for a seasonable supply, they answered, "not so: lest there be not enough for us and you." They had only enough for themselves.

But, say the Catholics, are there not *counsels* in the Bible, as well as *precepts*—certain things which are *recommended*, though not *required?* If so, and a person, besides obeying the precepts, complies with the counsels, doing not only what is required, but also what is recommended, is not here a foundation for works of supererogation? This is plausible, but that is all. My motto being *brevity*, I shall not attempt an extended answer to it, but take these few things.

1. If there *are* counsels recommending things which

no precepts require, yet obedience to these counsels cannot constitute works of supererogation, and accumulate merit, unless all the *precepts* are perfectly obeyed. A man must do all that is required, before he can do more than what is required. Now, has any mere man since the fall perfectly obeyed all the commandments of God? Has any man done *all* his duty? If not, I reckon no one has done *more* than his duty. We don't generally go beyond a thing until after we have come up to it. A cup does not usually run over before it is full. But,

2. According to this doctrine of the church of Rome, men are capable of a higher virtue than God has required! They can, and actually do, perform virtuous and holy acts which belong to neither of the tables of the law, and which are comprehended neither in the love of God nor in the love of man! Is this idea admissible? The Psalmist says, "thy commandment is exceeding broad." But according to this doctrine, the virtue of the Catholic is *broader*. I, however, don't believe it.

3. There is no counsel which does not become a precept or command, provided it be found that God can be more glorified by a compliance with it than otherwise. The thing recommended, if in any case it be apparent that the doing of it will redound to the glory of God, is *ipso facto* required, and becomes a duty. Take the favorite example of the Catholics, celibacy, which, they say, is recommended but not required. Now, if any one find that he can better serve God in the single condition than in the matrimonial state, celibacy is in that case his duty; and being a duty, a thing required, it can be no work of supereroo-

gation. When celibacy is not a duty, there is no virtue in it. Does any one believe that Enoch would have been more virtuous, and walked more closely with God, if he had not fallen into the mistake of matrimony?

But I arrest my remarks, lest, in criminating one kind of supererogation, I myself be guilty of another

---

56. Convents.

Every body knows how important convents, monasteries, nunneries, &c. are in the Roman Catholic religion. Who has not heard of monks and nuns, and of the establishments in which they respectively seclude themselves from the *world*? What a pity they cannot keep the flesh and the devil as far off! But the flesh they must carry in with them: and the devil is at no loss to find an entrance. There are no convents that can shut these out; and it is my opinion that it is not of much use to exclude the world, if they cannot at the same time shut out the other two. The world would be very harmless, but for the flesh and the devil. Besides, I am of opinion that a person may be *of* the world, though not *in* the world. *In*, but not *of* the world, is the Protestant doctrine, and the true plan. People forget that the world is not the great globe, with all its land and water; but that it is often an insidious little thing, which, ere one knows it, has taken up its lodgment in the heart. The heart

can entertain the world. If so, convent cannot even keep out the world. They do not answer the purpose therefore for which they are intended.

But be this as it may, I find nothing for convents in the Bible. In the Old Testament not a word about them—in the New not a word. Now if they are such grand contrivances for making people good, and for keeping them pure, I am surprised they were never thought of till after the canon of Scripture was closed. Why do not the men who speak by inspiration of God, say any thing about them? This puzzles me. I wish some of the Catholic writers would explain the reason. They tell us why St. Paul omitted to say any thing in his writings about the mass. It was, say the authors of the Rhemish Testament in their annotations on Hebrews, 7: 17, "because of the depth of the mystery, and the incredulity or feebleness of those to whom he wrote." We thank them for the admission that the apostle did not teach the doctrine of the mass. But how came they to know the reason of his silence upon it? May be it was for a similar reason that he maintained a perfect silence on the subject of convents!

But if convents are such clever things, why did not *Enoch* take the vow of celibacy, and go into one, instead of "walking with God and begetting sons and daughters?" How much better a man, according to the Catholic notion, he would have been, had he only been a monk! And why did not St. John banish himself to some solitary Patmos, and there live the life of a hermit, before a persecuting emperor drove him into it? Why did not *Peter* and his wife part, and he turn friar and she nun? We look to such characters

for examples. Why did not the Marys, or some other of the pious women of whom we read in the Bible, take the veil? Monachism, they may say, is an improvement on those times. But I do not like the idea of improvements on a system arranged by the wisdom of the Son of God himself.

There is what we call the *spirit* of a book. Now, the entire system of convents seems to me as clearly at variance with the spirit of the Bible, as one thing can be at variance with another. The Bible appears to have been written for persons who were to live in society with their fellow-men. It supposes human beings to be associated together in families and in civil communities, not as immured in monasteries and shut up in nunneries. It takes up the various relations of life, and descants on the duties growing out of them. But the system of Monachism dissolves these relations. Is it scriptural then? But why should I ask if that be scriptural which was first instituted by St. Anthony in the fourth century after Christ?

Again, if the system is favorable to holiness, then all equally need it, since all are required to be equally holy—to be holy as God is holy. But what would soon become of us all, if the system should become universal, and all adopt these means of holiness? This idea, that the means of the most eminent sanctity required of any, are not accessible and practicable to all, is radically erroneous. It is no such thing. It cannot be. Therefore I conclude against convents.

But while I impugn the system, I bring no charges against the existing edifices, called convents. I would never have them assailed by any other force than

that which belongs to an argument. If I were a Roman Catholic, I could not more indignantly reprobate than, being a protestant, I do, the recent burning of one of these buildings. If truth and argument can prostrate them, let them fall; but not by axes, and hammers, and fire-brands. All I contend for is, that the whole concern of convents is unscriptural. Those who inhabit them may be as pure as any who live outside; and so I shall believe them to be, until I have *proof* to the contrary. This plan of suspecting, and of making mere suspicion the ground of condemnation, is no part of my religion. It is a part of my Protestantism to *protest* against it.

---

57. Mr. Berrington and Mrs. More.

In reading the interesting memoirs of Mrs. Hannah More, I was struck with a letter which that good lady received in 1809 from Joseph Berrington, the Pope's Vicar General, taking exception to something she had said in her "Cœlebs" about Popery. He is very much offended with her. He complains, among other things, of her use of the word Popery, to designate the Roman Catholic religion. Now, some of us do not make much use of that word, as knowing it is offensive to the Catholics, and not willing to say any thing irritating to them; and when we do use it, I believe it is more for brevity than for any other reason—to avoid tedious circumlocution. It is as much out of regard to the

printer as any thing else. I do not see, however, why they should so strongly object to the word Popery. They all hold to the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, and regard him as the head of the church. Why then should not their religious system be called after him? We call ours after the one we regard as supreme in spiritual matters, and head of the church. We call it Christianity, after Christ. Why not for the same reason call theirs Popery, after the Pope? We do not even get angry when they call us Calvinists, and our doctrinal system Calvinism. Yet with much more reason might we; for what is Calvin to us? He is only one of many thousand eminent men who have espoused substantially the system of doctrine we do.

I find in Mr. B's. letter this remarkable sentence: "Nothing is more surprising than that you Protestants should be so utterly ignorant, as you really are, or seem to be, of our tenets; when we all, whatever be our country, think alike, and our catechisms and books of instruction lie open before the world." He says nothing is more surprising. But there is one thing which is even more surprising. It is that any intelligent ecclesiastic should venture to write such a sentence. He says we Protestants are, or seem to be, utterly ignorant of their tenets. Now, the truth is, there are few things we are better acquainted with than the tenets of Roman Catholics. They say we do not let them speak for themselves. Yes, we do. Do they not speak for themselves in their own manuals, breviaries, and catechisms printed under their own sanction and supervision? If we take their tenets from their own books, and quote verbatim, and refer to the edition and page, is not that enough?

Well, we do so. Yet they say we misrepresent them. How can that be? They may misrepresent and contradict themselves, but it is hard to hold us responsible for that. If we are ignorant of their *tenets*, it is because they do not themselves constantly *hold* to them. If they *let go* their doctrines, as soon as Protestants attack and expose them, and resorting to explanations, evasions and glosses, do thus virtually *take hold* of something different from their original and published tenets, we are not to blame for that, I should think.

But Mr. B. tells us what makes our ignorance so surprising: "when we all, whatever be our country, think alike." Do they all think alike? They did not always all think alike. See history. And so far as they do think alike, does the reader know how it comes about? It is by virtue of not thinking at all. But grant they all think alike. Does it follow that they think right? Has no error ever been very popular? The world all thought alike once on astronomy —all held the earth to be the centre of the system. But did they think right? However, it is convenient to have a large number of persons all think alike, for then, if you can ascertain what one thinks, you know what all think, and if you read one book, you know what is in them all. So, if you chance to fall in with a Spanish or Italian Catholic, and he tells you what he thinks, you know what every English and American Catholic thinks, for they "all think alike." So, if you take up one catechism or book of instruction and read that, you know what they all ought to contain. It saves a great deal of trouble.

But the Vicar complains bitterly of the Bishop of

Durham, for asserting that the Catholics suppress the second commandment. He says it is no such thing, and that any school boy could tell him different. And he affirms that a catechism was put into the hands of the Bishop containing that commandment, and still he persisted in his assertion. The Bishop was right; and "nothing is more surprising" than that Mr. B should deny it. I have myself seen two different catechisms, published in Ireland by Catholic book-sellers, and under the highest Catholic authority, from both of which the second commandment was excluded; and it is left out of "the Christian's Guide,' published in Baltimore by the Catholics, as any one may see for himself. Now what could Mr. B. say to this? Would he say, "O! those were published in Ireland and America." But he says, "we all, *whatever be our country*, think alike." Would he say that he spoke of 1809, and these were published since? But it is their boast that they not only do now all think alike, but that they always did think alike. Would he say that if it was left out of those catechisms, yet it was retained in others? Yes; but if their catechisms differ, how do they all think alike? Besides, no one ever accused the Catholics of leaving the second commandment out of every one of their books. But why do they leave it out of any? Will they please to say why they leave it out of any? They have never condescended to answer that question. They always evade it. If a man should publish successive editions of the laws of any country, and should leave out of some of the editions a certain important law, would it be sufficient for him to say that he did not leave it out of all the editions? Why did he leave it out of

any? Why did he not make them all uniform? A man may as well tell me I have no eyes, as deny that some Catholic catechisms have been published without the second commandment. Now, why was ever a catechism published under Catholic sanction without it? Did they ever publish one in which they omitted any other of the commandments? Did Protestants ever publish a list of the commandments with one omitted, and another divided so as to make out the ten? Alas for them! there is no getting out of this dilemma into which they have brought themselves by their mutilation of the decalogue. It is about the most unfortunate thing they ever did for themselves. I do not wonder that Mr. B. was restless under the charge. But surely, he had too much good sense to suppose that he had answered the Bishop, when he showed him a catechism that had the commandment in it. It is as if a man, charged with falsehood in a particular instance, should undertake to answer the charge by showing that in another instance he had spoken the truth. The Catholics are very uneasy to get rid of this millstone about the neck of their religion. They see it is in danger of sinking it. But they cannot slip it off so easy; and if they cannot manage to swim with it, it must sink them. Well, if it does, and nothing but the system goes to the bottom, I shall not be sorry.

In the course of his letter, Mr. B. speaks of "the *anarchical* principle of private judgment." And is this a principle which leads to anarchy? *Paul* did not seem to think so. He says: "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." What anarchy must have existed in the Berean church, where, after

hearing the word, they "searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so!" What confusion there must have been where all read and thought for themselves! They needed an Inquisitor to set things to rights. He is the man to mend matters when people fall to "searching the Scriptures." Well, if the 19th century will tolerate the denunciation of private judgment on any subject, I suppose it must be so; but I cannot say Amen.

---

58. A New Method of Exciting Devotion.

There seems to be no end to new discoveries. Marching mind appears to have no idea of *halting*. Probably improvements will go on until the world itself terminates. What should I see, in taking up the Observer of January 3d, but an article headed "Cathedral at St. Louis?" Then followed a description taken, be it known, not from any scandalous Protestant paper, but from the Catholic Telegraph, printed at Cincinnati, of the building, altar, &c. By the way the altar is of stone, but they tell us this is only temporary, and will soon be superseded by a superb marble altar which is hourly expected from *Italy*. Why go all the way to Italy for an altar? Why not employ our own mechanics and artists? We have marble enough here, and men enough. But I suppose it is a *present*. Our country is receiving a great many presents now from abroad. Foreign *Catholics* are particularly kind to us. You know we are making the

great experiment whether a free, representative government can sustain itself; and our *Austrian* and *Italian* brethren, sympathizing with us, want to help us all they can. They mourn especially over the deplorable lack of religion in this country, and are anxious to supply it. Nor is it in building and furnishing churches alone that they are disposed to help us. They cannot bear to see our children growing up in such ignorance. They are not used (they would have us believe) to an ignorant population; and then, what is to become of the republic if the people are not educated? So they come from Ireland, France, Italy, and all those countries, male and female, to educate us. A sceptical person might be tempted to ask if there is nothing of the kind to be done at home—if, for example, they cannot find any uneducated children in *Ireland*, but they must come over here to find them. However that be, they come. But what strikes me with wonder, is, that when they get here, they are all for educating *Protestant* children. Why do they not give the children of Catholics, their own people, a chance? There are many of them scattered over the land, and they are not all self-taught. I should like to have this explained. Common sense suggests that there must be a motive for making this distinction, and shrewdly suspects it is *proselytism*. Charity waits to hear if any more creditable reason can be assigned. But this is digression.

Well, on the 26th of October the grand building was consecrated. The procession consisted of an "ecclesiastical corps" amounting to fifty or sixty, of whom four were bishops, and twenty-eight priests, *twelve of whom were from twelve different nations*. You see

they are coming upon us from all quarters. It would really seem as if all Europe was conspiring to pour in its priests among us. Here are priests of *twelve* different nations met at St. Louis! Protestantism has to depend for its men and money on native Americans; but Popery, you perceive, has all Europe to draw upon. If, with this advantage, the latter religion should make considerable progress in our country, we must not be surprised. Whether this influx of foreign priests augurs good or evil to our free institutions, is a question on which I will express no opinion.

I come now to the novelty which suggested the title of this article—the new discovery—the improvement I spoke of. The editor, or his correspondent, says, "As soon as the procession was organized, the pealing of three large and clear-sounding bells, and the thunder of two pieces of artillery, raised all hearts, as well as our own, to the Great and Almighty Being." Now is not this something *new*? I always thought bells were to call people together, not to raise them up. But here he says they raised all hearts. However, it was with the help of the thundering artillery. It was the bells and guns together that did it. They made such a noise that at once all hearts were raised. What an effect from such a cause! Will the reader please to consider what was done and what did it? All hearts were raised to God by means of three bells and two guns! Is not this a *new* method of exciting devotion? Who ever heard before of noise composing the mind and preparing it for devout exercises? According to this, the fourth of July should be the day of all others in the year most favorable to devotion. And what a calamity deafness now appears to be; and how to be

pitied they are who lived before the invention of gunpowder! I never knew before that this was among the benefits of that invention, that it inspires devotional feelings, and raises hearts on high. But we must live and learn.

Well, all hearts being raised as before, "the holy relics (alias, the old bones) were moved towards the new habitation, where they shall enjoy anticipated resurrection—the presence of their God in his holy tabernacle." What this means, the reader must find out for himself. Now, when the relics were moved, the writer tells us what the guns did. "The guns fired a second salute." They could not contain themselves. Neither could the writer. "We felt," says he, "as if the soul of St. Louis was in the sound." A soul in a sound! Here is more that is *new*.

Then we are told who preached the dedication sermon; and afterwards we are informed, for our edification, that "during the divine sacrifice, (the Protestant reader, perhaps, does not know what is meant by this phrase, but if the *twelve* nations continue to send over their priests, we shall know all about it by and by,) two of the military stood with drawn swords, one at each side of the altar; they belonged to a guard of honor, formed expressly for the occasion. Besides whom, there were detachments from the four militia companies of the city, the Marions, the Greys, the Riflemen, and the Cannoniers from Jefferson Barracks, stationed at convenient distances around the church." The reader will not forget that certain professed ambassadors of "the Prince of Peace" were here engaged in dedicating a church to his service; and this is the way they took to do it. If they had been conse-

crating a temple to *Mars*, I don't know how they could have selected more appropriate ceremonies. Here were soldiers, drawn swords, guns, and, as we shall see presently, colors and drums too, all to dedicate a church to the meek and lowly Jesus, and that too on the day of *rest!*

One more quotation from this glowing description. "When the solemn moment of the consecration approached, and the Son of the living God was going to descend, for the first time, into the new residence of his glory on earth, the drums beat the reveille, three of the star-spangled banners were lowered over the balustrade of the sanctuary, the artillery gave a deafening discharge." All that seems to have been wanting here was *three cheers*. Those would have been quite as suitable as the other accompaniments of the service. Reader, is this religion; and are these the things which are pleasing to God?

I have a word to say about the star-spangled banner. That is an ensign endeared to every American heart. Whether it is as highly esteemed by the *twelve* nations, I cannot say. But a church is not its appropriate place. There is another banner which should wave there—and that is not star-*spangled*. One solitary star distinguishes it—the star—the star of Bethlehem. Let us keep these things separate: under the one, go to fight the bloodless battles of our Lord—under the other, march to meet our country's foes. This is the doctrine of American Protestantism—no union of church and state, and no interchange of their appropriate banners.

THE END.

BV
4501
.N4
1836

PRACTICAL
THOUGHTS/ NEVINS

219388

NONCIRCULATING

BV
4501
.N4
1836

219388

NONCIRCULATING

St. Mark's Library
175 Ninth Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10011

GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
00115075